

CLOUD GAZING FROM AFAR

A woman with long, wavy red hair is shown from the chest up. She is holding a lit cigarette in her right hand. A large, thick cloud of white smoke is rising from the cigarette, completely obscuring her face and upper body. She is wearing a light-colored, possibly white, jacket. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with greenery and a building.

A comparative analysis of how
electronic cigarettes are branded
and perceived across markets

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Characters: 118.528

Pages: 71

Master Thesis

Management of Creative Business Processes

Copenhagen Business School

15.07.2015

Author

Nathalie Gylling Hansen

Supervisor

Laurel Austin

Department of Management, Politics and Philosophy

Photos

Katarina Hybenova

Unless stated otherwise

ABSTRACT

This thesis turns its attention to the newfangled product innovation that is electronic cigarettes. The point of departure is an inquiring interest in the very distinctive marketing of electronic cigarettes as seen in The United States of America and in Denmark respectively, a variance that indicate a general difference in how the product is perceived. Therefore, the thesis sets out to determine present discourses, which might have manifested themselves in cross-cultural advertisement, media and public discussions on electronic cigarettes.

In order to accomplish this, the thesis discusses the concept of culture and explains how the culture concept is applied within the realm of social science and in a globalizing world, where the question of standardizing or customizing the marketing mix is growing increasingly complex. The discussion is further balanced by theoretical contributions by Stuart Hall and Michel Foucault. Where Hall's classic communication framework is linked to Foucault's ideas on discourse and how the notion of power and knowledge are central within cultural contexts. The thesis then applies a qualitative methodological approach inspired by discourse analysis practice. This was chosen as the optimal method to navigate within an emerging field like the one at hand. Three different data groups in both The United States of America and Denmark were collected to shine light on the different public conversations. The various data groups also contributed with an intertextuality that is inherent to discourse analysis.

The analysis discovered an array of different discourses in an American cultural context, where the dominant one was determined as freedom, which was revealed in different perspectives and across all media groups. The Dominant discourse in Denmark was health – a discourse dominant to the extent that is deemed as hegemonic. Using Foucault's concepts it is suggested that the results can be understood as the welfare state's and bio-politic's power to optimize the health of the individual, whereas the American context was characterized by a freedom discourse that rejects the bio-political imperative of optimizing and prolonging the life of the population. It was further suggested that the disparate legislative landscape could hinder a more uniform approach to electronic cigarettes, insofar it contributes to a slower market development in a Danish context.

The research has some limitations. Owing to time constraints, it was not possible to analyze a greater sample size. The method samples therefore might reflect certain newspapers and brands. Moreover the articles were collected within a specific time frame, so it is unknown if the findings would be relevant to data located in other media or timeframes. Similarly, because the e-cigarette market is rapidly changing, the analysis may not be applicable in the future.



A warm thank you to all who
listened, supported, read,
commented and advised.

A special thank you to Laurel
Austin for patient, committed
and knowledgeable supervision.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter one serves to present the background for the chapters to come and explains the purpose of the thesis. Furthermore a review of the current regulative environment in The U.S., Europe and Denmark will provide important information in order to follow some arguments in the following chapters.

BACKGROUND

Year on year, Oxford Dictionaries determine one single word that resonates in the public sphere and supposedly best captures the zeitgeist of the past twelve months. At first glance, the 2014 peculiar choice of ‘vape’ might not spark recognition with everyone, but a few Google searches will soon enough reveal that vape has ties to several ongoing societal debates and in fact ‘has been a lightning rod for a lot of discussion about the position we want to take as a society’ (Taylor, 2014).

A *vape* or *to vape* refer to an electronic cigarette device or the act of inhaling or exhaling the vapor of such device. Vaping is a way of obtaining various substances such as marijuana, nicotine and other chemicals without the use of rolling paper and disposable filters and more importantly,

without the use of tobacco cigarettes, yet still mimicking their behavioral and sensory characteristics. The use and awareness of electronic cigarettes (e-cigs) have surged rapidly during the past decade. A growth spotted by policy- and moneymakers alike, igniting debates that most likely have yet to reach culmination. As a somewhat newfangled product, rigorous research is still limited, quality control varies and researchers have yet to establish any health risks of using e-cigs (Lindblom, 2015).

Meanwhile, politicians and various interest organizations advocate for a severe rebuke and sterner statutory policy, arguing that the use of e-cigs could turn out to be a ‘gateway to addiction’, rather than a cessation aid, if exposed to a wrong target market. Marketers, on the other hand, reap the benefits of blurred legislation and are given a significantly increased expenditure amount by e-cig manufacturers (Durbin, Waxman et al., 2014) – some now owned by the tobacco industry.

Even though the market rise in e-cigs is almost a global phenomenon (Bauld, & Angus, 2014), the public story about e-cigs differ significantly across markets. In the United States (U.S.) cultural sponsorships, retail

cooperations and aggressive product innovation indicates that the e-cig business is something that the commercial world is investing in. The public has embraced the product, meticulously choosing their brand design as a fashion accessory, which was cemented by NJOY – an American e-cig brand, sponsoring New York Fashion week in 2013 and thereby emphasizing strong ties between the fashion world and e-cigs. Furthermore, 'Blu' (another U.S. e-cig manufacturer) developed a range of e-cigs with a social network function (Brustein, 2011), where the package would vibrate and flash a blue light, when picking up a radio signal within 50 feet from a similar package. Other nations have a much more cautious approach, some having enforced a complete ban of e-cigs and/or limited its usage to restricted areas – as is the case with tobacco products in many countries. In the northern sphere of Scandinavia, Denmark in particular, e-cig manufacturers are given a hard time. Strict policies, banning liquid nicotine that is not medically licensed, has hindered the sales of nicotine filled e-cig liquids on the Danish market, which has forced many aspiring e-cig entrepreneurs to register their business abroad. Yet, the amount of vapers in

Denmark is growing rapidly. With an experienced growth of almost 50% from 2012 to 2013 and currently over 200.000 recorded vapers in Denmark (Sundhedsstyrelsen, 2015), the development is reminiscent to that of U.S's. However, that is where the similarities come to an end. In Denmark, e-cigs sponsorships and celebrity endorsements are non-existent, in fact advertisement are far in-between and seem to position e-cigs as cessation aids rather than preaching lifestyle related messages. We do not see the same product in Denmark and in U.S.; we do not see the same marketing.

So even though e-cigs have become an international phenomenon, taking a step back makes you wonder. Gazing at the ever-thickening vaping clouds embracing both the U.S. and Denmark, the very distinct dissimilarity in the branding of e-cigs becomes curious. Does this differing marketing of e-cigs reflect cultural differences?

Thus, this thesis sets out to explore differences in cross-cultural advertisement, media and public discussions on electronic cigarettes by examining

'how certain discourses and cultural characteristics manifest themselves in public discussions and beliefs, simultaneously dictating the chosen path of promotion'.

This is explored within two Western countries. The United States and Denmark.

In order to examine the above research question the thesis commences by discussing the purpose and relevance for the study as well as providing a contextualization of current legislation in the United States and Denmark.

PURPOSE AND RELEVANCE

Increasing globalization has tempted many a marketer, to standardize advertising efforts across borders to minimize costs. However, as invisible as borders might appear, cross-cultural differences still needs to be measured and documented in order to understand how to market various products. Measuring cross-cultural differences in perceptions and attitudes, in a globalizing setting, can be used to help marketers and advertising agencies alike, to develop an understanding of cultural sensitivity and

differences, enabling them to take on creative tasks of communicating to people of diverse cultural backgrounds.

In a communication perspective it is interesting to study the style and messages of e-cig advertisers, as well as perceptions and attitudes toward e-cigs as a product, because they might reflect a certain public discourse.

Previous research, such as such as Biswas, Olsen and Carlet (1986) have already completed comparative content studies of advertising from culturally diverse countries, and in 2014 Grana & Ling, even did a comparative content analysis on e-cig websites. However, most studies tend to use quantifiable methods in their analyses. Following Cayla & Arnould (2008:88), taking a more cultural approach in comparative studies, requires 'a constellation of understandings such as the relationship between individuals and society' and a necessity to recognize that international marketing is more than just a technique. This thesis, thus attempts to include media discussion and public debate in a qualitative analysis. But first, some information about the e-cigarette, how it differs from the

conventional cigarette and why some consumers prefer one to the other.

WEAPON OF CHOICE

An e-cigarette is a battery-powered device that heats a steel casing typically containing nicotine, flavor and other chemicals, which then generate an aerosol for inhalation (Grana & Ling, 2014).

Figure 1: Different types of e-cig devices



The e-cigarette design differs, but is mostly comparable to conventional cigarettes or a pipe-like device.

Newer models are also streamlined to resemble items such as pens, USB memory sticks and some brands even have an innovative dual function, where the device can connect to smartphones and tablets via a Bluetooth function, enabling a music player or phone function (Woollaston, 2014).

The one feature that is often highlighted about e-cigs is that they don't contain tar, as regular cigarettes do. Yet, there is still little awareness of the potential damage the e-liquids can do over long term.

Even though the e-cig has just recently gotten a foothold in the marketplace, the e-cig inventor Herbert A. Gill, acquired a product patent as early as in 1963. Since 2004 the product has been on the market and sold publicly. In 2012 Lorillard (a tobacco company) acquired Blu e-cigs, and since then many tobacco giants have followed this path, which means that the marketing budget for the e-cig business has gone through the roof (Curry, Pederson, & Stryker, 2011). With both a market boom and sky-high investments the future of e-cigs looks rather bright.

Figure 2 gives an overview of the most important years in the e-cig history. The FDA (as mentioned in the figure) is an abbreviation for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

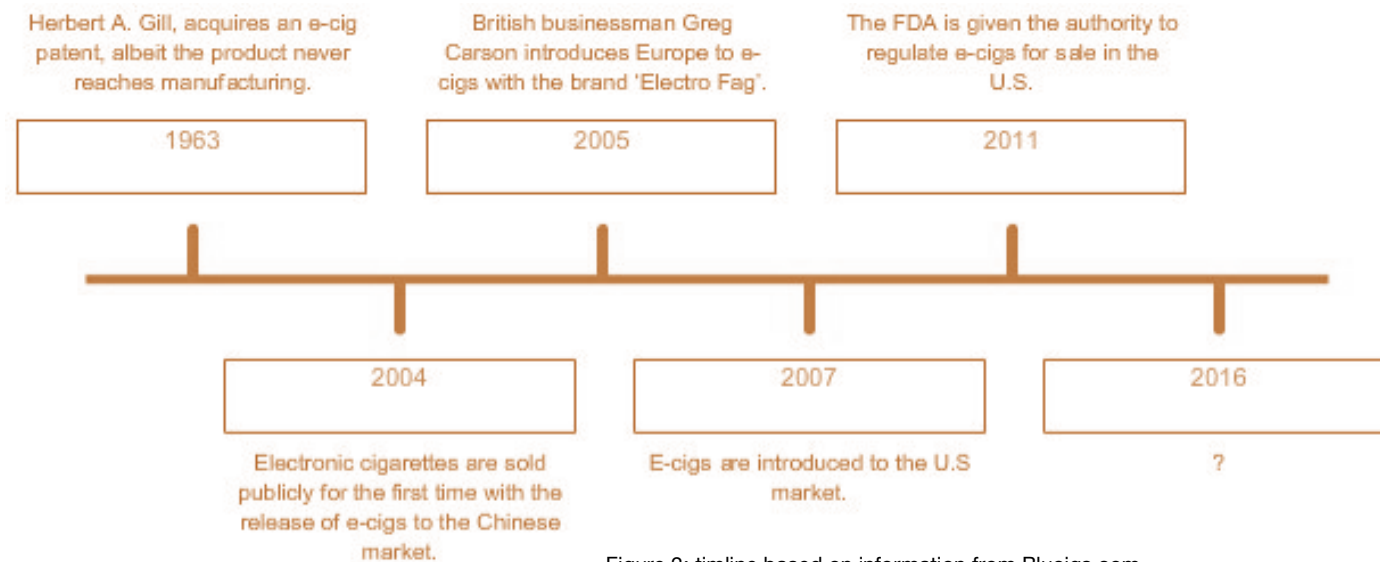


Figure 2: timeline based on information from Blucigs.com

LAW ABIDING CITIZENS

E-cigarettes have spread to virtually most corners of the globe, and where there are vapers, there are also governmental conversations going on concerning if, and how, to regulate these new devices. In order to portray nuanced and fair insights and have a meaningful discussion on the topic, it is important to understand and take into account these different legislations, in particular the law landscape in the U.S. and in Denmark respectively. These legal differences might

have a say in the actions of marketers and in the public's perception of e-cigs.

No medical licenses have been issued in any nation state for any type of e-cigarette, so where medical authorizations and prescriptions are said to be required, a ban is in place. A 'license' is a pharmaceutical license, also known as an MA (market authorization). The MA is required to both sell and market a product if it is licensed as a medicinal product.

U.S

In the U.S., policies and regulations in regards to e-cigs are somewhat unclear. While the selling, use, and advertisement of e-cigs is permitted federally, individual states and even cities have the power to weigh in and introduce their own regulations. This thesis will concentrate on the general rules where e-cigs are permitted in terms of import, sale and advertising.

According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA, 2015), e-cigs are currently considered to be unregulated tobacco products, yet the FDA has proclaimed their intention to regulate e-cigs as tobacco products. This would let them tighten rules in future.

The FDA attempted a complete ban in 2010 but this was rejected by a series of appeal courts. A pharmaceutical classification was also rejected.

DENMARK

As in the U.S., The European Union currently has no direct legislation against the use of e-cigarettes (European Commission, 2015). General safety measurements do

however provide preventive measures allowing e-cigs to be banned throughout Europe if they are found to be hazardous to public health in the future. Each nation within Europe has put forward specific conventions and decides whether e-cigs falls within the definition of a medicinal product.

In Denmark a so-called two-tier system, which can be characterized as a partial permission, is employed (Sundhedsstyrelsen, 2015). Nicotine is a regulated medicine in Denmark and no delivery device for liquid nicotine has been approved. Essentially this means that e-cig liquid may be sold, if they do not contain nicotine, whereas liquids with nicotine require a medical license. As no medical licenses have yet been issued anywhere, it is illegal to sell e-cigs containing nicotine liquid in Denmark.

Furthermore, there are no regulations restricting promotion of e-cig devices and liquids without nicotine, unless it [the promotion] gives the impression of pharmaceutical use.

Taking matters into own hands however, it is possible to acquire nicotine liquids for personal use from other EU countries by post (ibid). This is due to a distinction

between personal import and commercial import. EU regulations enable individuals to import e-cigs and nicotine liquids from other EU nations. This means that many Danish E-cig entrepreneurs have registered their business outside of Denmark, albeit still selling and targeting their products to Danes.

STEP BY STEP – A READING GUIDE

This chapter formed the introducing chapter and explained the background for the chapters to come and presented the purpose of the thesis. Furthermore a review of the current regulative environment in The U.S., Europe and Denmark formed important information in order to follow some arguments in the following chapters.

In **Chapter 2** the chosen theory is presented. It includes an interdisciplinary discussion about the concept of culture in relation to marketing practices. The chapter ends with an insight into communication theory and the underlying power structures that determine modern communication as inspired by Foucault.

Chapter 3 determines social constructionism as the underlying position this thesis has taken in order to construct the following review of method for the analysis. The method is justified by a presentation of the three different data groups and their combined validation.

In the **4th chapter** the comparative analysis of the different data groups is formed. The chapter compares the U.S. data results with the Danish data results in each data group, whilst continuously cross comparing the data groups. The chapter is concluded with an interpretation of the most dominant themes.

The thesis is finalized with a conclusion in **chapter 5** that serves to sum up the points that were made from assessing the previous chapters.





CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

This chapter provides a presentation of academic theories that are important to grasp in order to discuss the main purpose of the thesis in a meaningful way. Therefore the chapter firstly establishes the concept of culture and discusses how it can be meaningful to use within social sciences and the marketing sphere in particular. The chapter ends with an introduction to Stuart Hall's communication framework that contains Michel Foucault's idea of discourse and power, which the analysis is inspired by.

CULTURE – WHAT, WHERE AND WHO HAS IT?

The nature and content of comparative cultural studies evidently depend on which definition of culture one uses. However, definitions of culture both change over time and vary at any given time. Through Western history the concepts of culture have fundamentally changed from something that some people have and others do not (Baumann, 1996), to more general ideas such as biological reductionism (a certain ethnicity's way of life) or a cognitive

storage of compiled learning. Underneath these very general definitions there are a variety of more specific uses of the term, e.g. subculture, high culture, body culture, elite culture etc. Modern-day culture theory does not speak of culture as a singular and static phenomenon of course. Today, culture in an anthropological understanding is perceived as practices and patterns of public opinion - in constant change.

More recent academic attempts at definitions of culture, battle to be on the one hand general enough to include all forms of culture and on the other hand specific enough to still retain meaning. Yet, in contemporary terms a common denominator is that culture becomes reified and as daunting as it might be to state, almost comparable to language. Language may be perceived as

The most fundamental objectification of all (...) nothing but a human product—or, at the least, any particular language. Still, language is experienced by the individual as an external facticity—things are that as which they are named. And language regulates the individual in near-automatic fashion, forcing itself upon him with a minimum of reflection on his part, it furthermore coerces him in many ways (e.g.

the educational system that teaches him
'correct' language)` (Berger, Peter & Pullberg,
1965:64)

The reified understanding of culture has much in common with above language characteristics. Culture is a human product; it is socially constructed. Culture might not be externalized by naming, but it still manifests itself in objects and regulates human behavior and thought pattern, thereby showcasing a coercive quality. This might seem rather postulating, but the following will attempt to stand its ground.

In a discourse of social science practices, such as marketing, the concept of reification may be attractive and also necessary because culture might then function as a predictive tool in branding and promotion strategies.

Baumann (1996:212) argues that

'It [dominant culture] has to be 'filled with traits'- that is, specified as a substantive heritage that is normative, predictive of individuals' behavior, and ultimately a cause of 'why' those who 'have' it behave as they do`

In other words, these almost tangible traits become cultural representations for different markets and the art of understanding specific ones enable marketers to target products and brands more strategically and ultimately more efficiently. This being said, researchers within the marketing sphere share an increasing concern with forms of symbolic representation and interpretation in an international and global perspective (Mooij, 2005). Focus lies mainly on problems related to processes in which cultural representations meet and interact, which gradually becomes more common in contemporary marketing due to the continuous globalization and national border transparency in terms of consumer goods and communication. Although globalization lends itself practical for the ease of getting communication and products across borders, researchers claim that despite some detected conjunction among consumers around the world, essential values still remain divergent or even conflicting across cultures. Mooij (2005) for instance, describes the use of color as a potential snare, as colors symbolize very different things for different people. E.g. a white gown worn by brides in the U.S. is the same colored

clothing to symbolize the act of mourning in India. Thus, opening up regional markets as well as global media, such as the Internet, means that consumers in certain markets will be exposed to different sorts of marketing, including particularly targeted campaigns that can clash with local values or legislation (Choi, Lee, & Kim, 2005). And although it seems ideal to undertake standardized campaigns, i.e. to recycle and replicate campaigns and advertisements across borders, both in terms of creating a unified message and economic reaps (Biswas, Olsen, & Carlet, 1986), marketers are paying careful attention to cultural barriers that often render standardized marketing efforts impractical (ibid).

Bottom of line is that the fact that globalization has become so widespread does not necessarily mean that there is a global homogenization of culture. Most comparative studies in regards to advertisement and brand perceptions has focused heavily on establishing the differences between the Eastern and the Western world, which has led to famous and frequently used frameworks, such as Hall's high/low context approach and Hofstede's cultural values framework (Mooij, 2005), which includes

dimensions such as 'individualism versus collectivism'. A framework that exposes and differentiate cultural differences to such an extent, that most standardized marketing tactics are deemed failures from the get go. Hofstede believes that the difference between individualism and collectivism is one of the strongest factors when differentiating advertisement strategies and many international marketing researchers approach consumer behavior by grouping consumers in accordance with these distinctions (Ibid). Cayla & Arnould (2008) argue that more Americans than Chinese approvingly receive advertisements backing individualist themes, because the latter is said to be more collectivist.

Conversely, the amount of broad similarities in the cultural patterns of two Western countries is conspicuous. In their 1986 article comparing print advertisement in France and United States, Biswal et al argue that the two countries basically share the same value system; both cultures refer to the universe as being mechanistic; and both cultures believe that the earth can be mastered and that people are radically different from any other form of life (Biswas, Olsen and Carlet, 1986:74). Taken from this perspective, the

dissimilarities between French and American culture seem to be minimal compared to the differences that exist between American and Asian culture. However, the society and culture of two Western nation states also differ significantly, albeit against a backdrop of commonality (Hannerz, 1992). Differences are largely dependent on how a given society is constructed in terms of localized systems, level of state control and so forth. These systems are in turn both created by interaction amongst people and the values surfacing therefrom, whilst also determining the frame or boundaries for the ongoing interaction. Thus, culture is perceived as socially constructed and largely determined by interaction within social groups. If culture is created by social interaction, surely geography will be a contributing factor. This ongoing interaction within different communities must create different meanings and ultimately different values, especially if the lack of geographical proximity is manifested by one of Earth's biggest oceans, which is the case with the U.S. and Denmark. Hence, two Western communities do not necessarily share the same values or cultural framework.

Consequently, cross-cultural differences within various marketing disciplines, and advertising expression in particular, are important fields within research. Primarily because understanding these differences enable marketers to take on the creative challenge of communicating to people with diverse cultural backgrounds, i.e. several different target markets. This notion has paved the way for an increased interest in the concept of distinct national cultures. Following Hannerz (1992) a national culture is the idea that people are part of a society with shared values and meanings. A society that can be targeted by international brands in the same way that specific target groups can be segmented by age, professions, wealth etc. These shared values are arguable shaped and channeled by societal structures and a number of the aforementioned localized systems such as institutional configurations; e.g. educational- and legal systems (political systems). Hence, for marketers culture is in many ways viewed upon as something collective, albeit something collective which is socially constructed. Hofstede's definition backs this assumption:

[Culture is] the collective mental programming of the people in an environment. Culture is not a characteristic of individuals; it encompasses a number of people who were conditioned by the same education and life experience' (Mooij,2005:35)

Furthermore, because of globalization and a continuous flow and exchange of meanings and symbols, culture is not viewed upon as something static or frozen, but more so liquid-like and emergent (Hannerz,1993). Something to monitor closely.

CULTURAL RESOURCES TO DRIVE CONSUMPTION

The notion of collective socially constructed cultures is indeed practical from a marketer's viewpoint, when defining cultural meaning in a given consumer society.

Sahlins argue that consumers are not as functionally oriented as they used to be, assuming that they once were. As mentioned previously, symbolic representation and interpretation is at the heart of the marketer's agenda, and with good reason. According to (Sahlins, 1999), symbols

are the origin and basis of human behavior. By this, Sahlins means to emphasize the human ability to attach importance to things that are considered to have certain value, i.e. symbolic aspects of consumption, and thus questions the consumer as solely rational in behavior. Value is not only understood in an economic sense, but more so in terms of intangible assets, adding meaning or value to products. He refers to the consumer that does not merely purchase products for what they are and are capable of, but also for what they mean. For instance the ability to have sentimental value for a heirloom, something that a cat would not be able to appreciate – arguable because it would not be able to recognize any difference, because there is no difference, not externally at least. In other words, whereas animals cannot distinguish between holy water and distilled water, humans are capable of attaching importance to things that are considered to have certain value (ibid).

People are said to form groups and circles based on similarities and in these groups they produce more similarities and mutual meanings through interaction and

exposure. These similarities turn into symbols, symbols that create the basis for cultural construction. Hence, Interaction and exposure within particular systems will create similar symbols amongst a group of people, e.g. within religion, sport or for the purpose of this thesis, countries. Thus, all products carry symbols (Aaker & Maheswaran, 1997). Corporations attempt to adapt marketing strategies to suit markets, because they assume to some extent that cultural backgrounds and practices affect what appeals to consumers, that people within a given consumer society show interest towards goods carrying symbols, which reinforce their identity. Insights such as these changed the way that corporations thought about their consumer and paved the way for a new agenda for corporate marketing, branding and product communication. Products are no longer sold solely based on functional benefits, but additionally on their symbolic meanings; their brand. Hence, brands and culture are inextricable coherent. Cayla & Arnould(2008:86) elaborate:

To talk of brands as cultural forms is to acknowledge that branding is a specific form of communication, which tells stories in the

context of products and services, addresses people as consumers, and promises to fulfill unmet desires and needs. In other words, branding is a specific symbolic form, a particular way of talking about and seeing the world`

The idea of goods carrying cultural meaning explains why design, quality etc. are value-adding factors in marketing. Commercial corporations attempt to translate these aforementioned meanings and symbols in order to target their products to an identifiable group and hence, use culture as a resource to drive consumption.

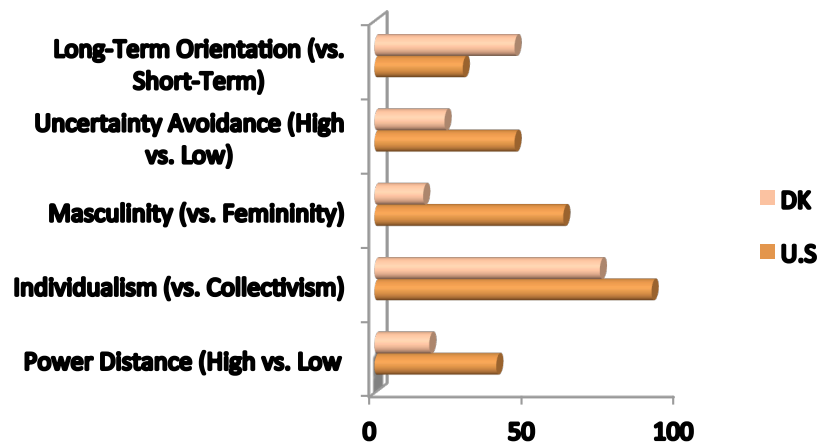
By solving puzzles of consumer culture, i.e. translating symbols, marketers within commercial corporations are able to attach these intangible assets or meanings to consumer goods, which in turn are transferred through different marketing instruments such as advertising (Mccracken, 1986). This enables them to create brands to best possible sell their product to an identifiable market.

WEST IS WEST

Given the above, there is a growing request for knowledge about a wider variety of cultural characteristics that answer to specific and strategic marketing messages (Paek, Yu, &

Bae, 2009). As briefly mentioned, this is something that Hofstede has dived into. His cultural dimensions framework is widely used and quantified, which makes it useful to explain observed differences between cultures. Therefore, for the purpose of this thesis, some of the main differences between U.S and Denmark will be presented in the following. The five dimensions are illustrated in figure 3 with country scores taken from Mooij (2005). Not all of the dimensions will be elaborated on, as this does not serve as an extensive review of Hofstede's work, but more so as a mean to exemplify immediate differences between the two nation cultures.

Figure 3: DK and U.S. scores in Hofstede's five dimensions



As exemplified in figure 3, the U.S. and Denmark are relatively on par in regards to most of Hofstede's Dimensions. What spring to mind is the different score on Masculinity, where the U.S. has a significantly higher score. This dimension is defined below.

'The dominant values in a masculine society are achievement and success; the dominant values in a feminine society are caring for others and quality of life'(Ibid:65)

Furthermore, Mooij (2005) underlines that feminine societies strive for consensus and are more people oriented. She demonstrates this argument by using Jante's Law, which is based on 10 rules that depicts the moral code in Denmark. If you break the moral code the people around you will dislike you. This implies interaction under a social code, i.e. individuals in Denmark does not want to stand out in a crowd. Conversely, in the U.S. standing out is a good thing, this is exemplified by the popularity of human resource schemes such as employee of the month, which not only emphasizes the perceived value of being successful, but also the notion of Individualism being a strong element of American society. Both the U.S. and

Denmark score high on individualism and none are perceived as collectivist cultures, which would mean that each person mostly see themselves as part of a group and not as an individual being. But whilst the Danes are both characterized as feminine and individualistic, they value individualistic freedom, but sometimes find the needs for affiliation stronger.

In the same way that Jante's Law frame the mind of the Danish public, the Americans thought pattern are characterized by both official and unofficial codes of conduct and embedded societal rules. An ingrained 'institution' like the First Amendment to the U.S. constitution, can exemplify this. The First Amendment cements the importance of individual freedom by strongly limiting the government ability to restrict different kind of public expression, hereunder commercial speech, such as advertising. The First Amendment is therefore an embodiment of anti-government (or authoritative) control that bares testimony to U.S. citizens' righteous conviction of personal autonomy.

THINK GLOBALLY ACT LOCALLY

The old marketing paradigm: markets are people, presupposes that marketing programs can only be successful when the marketing mix of the product is matched with the values of the consumer` (Ibid:77)

In a similar vein to the above quotation, marketing researchers propose that a product will be more successful and hence, sell more, if it is aimed to meet the needs of a given target market. Figure 4 depicts the importance of customizing the promotional message in the international marketing mix (Jobber, 2007).

Figure 4: Own figure based on Jobber (2007)



Even though the globalizing market makes room for more identical products, how to make them attractive across different markets varies because attitudes and motivations vary. The Sony Walkman serves as a fitting example of why a product needs to be positioned carefully and in accordance with specific target markets. The Walkman, initially invented in Asia, was marketed as a product that enabled owners to listen to music without *disturbing others*. When entering the European market however, research showed that tables had turned so to speak. The European consumers were interested in the Walkman, but for significantly different reasons, namely to prevent *being disturbed by others* whilst listening to music. Hence, in this case the original encoding of the message would be difficult to decode for Europeans, as it did not meet their needs. Thorough market research leading to cultural understanding led the same product to success in two divergent markets.

Contemplating the immediate vast difference in advertising and perception of e-cigs in the U.S and Denmark, one cannot help but think that similar research has taken place. And that Danes and Americans both either have very

different motives when purchasing e-cigs, or that different messages appeal to them, even if ultimately they want for same thing.

Although figure 4 suggests that merely promotion needs customization in an international context, clearly that should not be fully set in stone. The precious example of a white wedding gown proves that products do not necessarily translate well across cultures. Albeit it being undeniably easier to distinguish if a product will be popular in a specific cultural context, e.g. not including beef meat on the McDonalds menu in India. In opposition, it might be harder to understand why culturally diverse consumers see different opportunities in the same object, something that requires more market research and partially explains why this point in the marketing mix is accentuated.

WHITE NOISE

It is said that getting messages across in nations with developed economies, such as the U.S. and Denmark are extremely difficult. Communication overload is estimated at 97% (Paek et al, 2009), which mean that consumers are

discerning in what receives their attention. Selective perception means that 'what people see is a function of what they have been trained or what they have learned in the course of growing up' - Mooij (2005:39) goes as far as saying that we are prisoners of our own culture. The fact that certain consumer societies respond best to messages corresponding to their identity, i.e. messages that they understand, is emphasized by Hall's classic communication framework (During, 1999), which is illustrated in figure 5 (Mooij,2005).

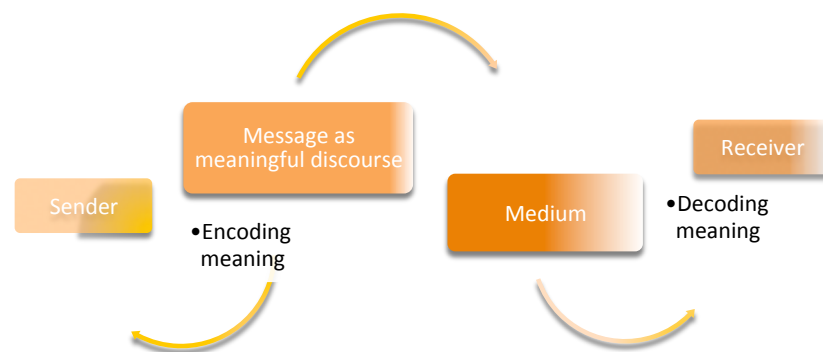


Figure 5: Based on information from (Mooij,2005)

The sender, in this case often marketers, communicates by encoding a message with the use of their cultural framework. This message is completely dependent on stories that can be interpreted and also recognized by the receiver, in this case consumers, who in turn also uses their culture framework to decode the message. Hall talks about these stories as discourses; 'something must become a discourse before it can become a communicative event' (During,1999:92).

The sender therefore needs to make sure that the sender and receiver share the same cultural bias, i.e. that the decoding result will correlate to the initial encoding, which ironically in a way ensures that the receiver also functions as the source. Hall's framework therefore empowers the consumer in arguing that they are able to interpret (decode) messages in different ways and hence deduce different meanings from the same message.

To enable a specific decoding process, a cultural discourse is reflected in the content and form of the message; hence encoded messages in e.g. advertising derive from a meaningful discourse in a given society.

Therefor, one should be able to deduct meaning about a given society, by interpreting the dominant stories within advertising targeted to this society. This again means that cultural knowledge provides the bases for interaction and hence marketing, which becomes a vital point when deciding on standardizing or customizing marketing content – particularly in an international context.

THE POWER OF DISCOURSE

Hall uses the term 'discourse', repeatedly in his work on encoding and decoding in communication. To him a certain discourse is consonant with a dominant story, a story that is a necessity in order to communicate efficiently within a cultural context. He is inspired by Foucault, who was very occupied with the concept of discourse throughout his writings (Wetherell, Taylor & Yates, 2001). According to Foucault, a discourse is a manifestation of several, often unconscious, societal movements, which combined come to be very powerful. A discourse is powerful because it is productive, it can enable certain beliefs or even actions.

Guided by Foucault, Rose (2012:190) defines discourse as:

'a groups of statements that structure the way a thing is thought, and the way we act on the basis of that thinking. In other words, discourse is a particular knowledge about the world which shapes how the world is understood and how things are done in it'

Foucault talks about 'regimes of truth' in which knowledge and power are imbricated, one in the other. He often turned to certain institutional discourses to elaborate on regimes of truth. A good example of this is the socially powerful institutions, those given coercive power by the state, e.g. prisons and hospitals. Their discourse claim absolute truth. In a hospital, if a patient is diagnosed with a mental illness, that becomes the truth – even if the patient chooses to accept it or not. The diagnosis becomes an institutional intervention that is legitimated by regimes of truth; the patient suffers from mental illness. Moreover, the 'objectification' of mental illness (or indeed the subjectification of being mentally ill), merely exist meaningfully within its discursive environment. It does not exist in itself. Thus, being mentally ill is not a nature born label or characterization, but more so something subjects

are if things like statements about mental illness, mentally ill who personify the discourse, and practices for dealing with these subjects (e.g. medical treatments) all contribute in producing knowledge (truth) about mental illness, i.e. if a certain idea of mental illness is constructed in the dominant discourse.

Truth is almost always historically claimed, as cultures and institutions that produce it, evolve and change with time. For years, most people believed that the earth was flat, because that was the dominant story, the discourse and the truth. But meanings and truths only occur within a historical context. Thus, nothing is an objective fact. It is only within discursive formations that objects and subjects appear meaningful. Would mental illness, mean the same to people five hundred years ago as it does today? – would anyone have a grasp about what mental illness is? Equally, cigarettes and smokers, whom were considered cool in the 60s U.S, have another place in the mind of the Americans today. A new truth about cigarettes and smokers exist, 'constituted by all that was said, in all statements that named it (...) described it, explained it, traced its development' (Wetherell, Taylor & Yates, 2001)

and so forth. As I will elaborate on in the analysis, this is a matter that concerns e-cigs as well.

In Foucault's opinion there is never just one single true reality, because the world is full of different discursive powers that can change over time or vary at any given time within different environments, institutions and cultures. Knowledge is discursive and all discourse is saturated with power.

Knowledge can be put to work through discursive practices in specific institutional settings to regulate the conduct of others. Such do for example regulations and law work, which Foucault refers to as institutional apparatus (Rose, 2012). They serve as ways to articulate certain discourses. Thus knowledge is inseparably entangled with power, because it is constantly applied to the regulation of social behavior in practice.

The fact that a discourse is a truth can also be interpreted as a normalizing function.

This is something that Foucault uses in his concept of governmentality (Dean, 2006). Governmentality is

characterized as a liberal form of government and a term of power, that intend to govern a population to govern themselves, a so-called disciplining of bodies. That is the act of installing firm beliefs about the world, that in turn will affect public decisions and behavior in an indirect way – to conduct oneself (ibid) or act in a certain manner, what Foucault referred to as the self-governing subject.

Paradoxically, freedom and not coercion becomes frame of conduct. Behavior then becomes a question of moral, because specific forms of knowledge within a discourse highlights what good and appropriate behavior is. Control within modern liberal government is a matter of establishing a framework, within which the subject can interact and self-governing can be achieved without coercion. The example of Jante's law is good to use again as example. None of the specific rules, within this code of conduct, are enforced by law, yet the moral beliefs are unconsciously deeply installed and embedded in most Danes.





CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3 METHODOLOGY

This third chapter is arranged in three sections. Firstly the epistemological position, inspired by social constructionism is presented. Secondly, the analytical framework with inspiration from Foucault's discourse analysis is presented. And lastly the method, which includes data collection and data analysis strategy, is put forward.

SUBJECTIVE REALITY

Within social constructionism the constant doubt about the existence of any objective reality dominates the way that research is carried out. The basic idea is that phenomena that are perceived as natural, in fact is socially constructed (Olsen & Fuglsang, 2004). A social constructionist approach should therefore be understood as positions that challenge the natural or 'taken for granted' essence of a discourse. Instead of exploring á reality, multiple realities that are constituted mainly via symbolic communication, and in particularly language, are under the loop. In this way all knowledge or 'truths' are social constructions that are often turned into certain discourses within a given society. That means that a reality can change from place to place.

That is indeed the underlying thought behind this thesis; that there are multiple different (subjective) realities in place, all of which dictates how humans and things are perceived differently. Hence, the attributes of e.g. organic food, is only healthy insofar it is spoken about as healthy within a community. Just as any shared ideas about e-cigs are not constant, nor are they nature given, they are social constructions.

This thesis investigates a very contemporary topic that is additionally new in an academic context. It revolves around a cultural phenomenon, which lends itself well to social constructionism for the above reasons.

MULTIPLE REALITIES

As mentioned previously, discourse is never a singular phenomenon. The social environment is always determined and given meaning by multiple discursive powers. A discourse analysis is not interested in discovering any underlying reality of a situation but rather with the way that participants in a setting or interaction construct their social worlds. This lends itself well for the purpose of this thesis

as the attempt is not to clarify whether e-cigs are healthy or justifiable, but more so to discover how they might be perceived and talked about in different discursive cultural contexts, i.e. different markets.

Since a discourse functions as a dominant truth about a given something, it appears in many shapes and forms as a coherent pattern of different statements across a range of sources. Therefore a discourse analysis is dependent on intertextuality for its interpretive power. A discourse analysis is concerned with the production of social difference through a web of intertextuality (Rose, 2012).

Hence, in discourse analysis it is important to find data from a variety of empirics, there is never just one main text or source, but a multitude of sources that serve to reinforce any dominant themes, which can then be interpreted as discourses (Bryman, 2005). Discourse analysis also tends to merge material that might previously were regarded as unrelated. Rose (2012:210) elaborates:

'Relations between statements (even if the author is unaware of them; even if the statements do not have the same author; even if the authors were unaware of each other's existence); relations

between groups of statements thus established (even if these groups do not concern the same, or even adjacent fields; even if they do not possess the same formal level; even if they are not the locus of assignable exchanges); relations between statements and groups of statements and even of a quite different kind (technical, economic, political, social).

When inspired by discourse analysis, it is important to read for what is not seen or said also (ibid). Absences can indicate just as important messages than visible ones. I.e. there might be a reason that something is not mentioned. This is especially valuable when doing a comparison, as it might come across as odd if a strong theme emerges in one context, but is completely invisible in another.

METHOD

The theoretical concepts provided earlier, set of rough general guidelines for the analysis. In allowing themes to emerge out of data the researcher is enabled to recognize the significance of understanding meaning in the context.

As this thesis is a comparative analysis, that seeks to explore potential different discourses within two disperse national cultures, the data material do not encompass one

central text, but several artifacts from three different data groups.

The following is a presentation of the three diverse datasets this thesis employs as well as the data collection process and data analysis strategy.

CONTEMPORARY PERSONAL DOCUMENTS – USERS

In this thesis it is interesting to explore how e-cig users in the U.S and in Denmark, respectively perceive themselves and also how they perceive e-cigs – especially in combinations with how manufacturers are attempting to brand them and how the public debate is shaped. In qualitative research it is common to conduct interviews in order to gain insight into the thought patterns and motivations within actors relevant for the study (Bryman, 2005). Rose (2012), however suggests that when looking for discourses, naturally occurring talk is preferred. Naturally occurring talk is said to be more valid because it is not produced in the context of a discourse analysis. In other words, an interview guide or template, or even just an interviewer would possibly impact the answers, thus not

receiving natural occurred data. Thus the user data for this thesis was collected via social media activity in online networks. The two networks were closed discussion groups on Facebook. The two groups were found via referrals from blog articles and are shown in figure 6. By joining the groups it was possible to gain insight into the dominating discussions and interactions amongst its members without any interfering.

Another option in a similar vein would have been to visit a physical Vape-shop and observe the way that people visit and work in them – but comparison would be an issue, since it would only have been possible in Denmark plus the divergent regulations might again be a hindrance.

	USA	Denmark
Network	We are CASAA closed facebook group	E-cigaret Denmark closed facebook group

Figure 6: Usergroups

The two networks are both very popular and active on a daily, even hourly, basis. The American network boasts of

over 15000 members, whilst the Danish network have over 2500 members.

The comments were collected on the 29.05.2015, an extract of the comments are portrayed in appendix III. Due to the activity pace of the comment flow, it was decided to collect and monitor the 50 latest posts in chronological order from each group as opposed to collecting posts within a timeframe similar to that of the media data collection method. Moreover, as many of these posts generated hundreds of comments, comments were not included. Because the comments in their majority referred or discussed points made in the actual post, it should be sufficient data to record themes from the posts alone. The user data thus consist of 100 “stand alone” user posts.

MASS MEDIA OUTPUTS – NEWS MEDIA

Even though e-cigs is a newfangled topic, the public discussion has been heated, which in turn attracts some attention from the media.

It is tempting to monitor all articles written within the relatively short lifetime of e-cigs, in order to catch the different time specific debates. However, that would prove too time demanding and space consuming for this thesis. Instead four different newspapers, two American and two Danish were chosen for further data collection and closer inspection. The newspapers were chosen on the grounds of their large circulation and their similar profile cross-country. The Newspapers chosen are shown in table 7.

	USA	Denmark
(social)Liberal Newspaper	The New York Times	Politikken
Conservative Newspaper	The Wall Street Journal	Berlingske Tidende

Figure 7: Media data groups

All articles were sourced on the newspaper websites through their search engines via search words

- ‘vape’
- ‘e-cigarettes’
- ‘e-cigs’

- ‘electronic cigarettes’

All articles published between 01.01.2015 – 29.05.2015 were written down in a matrix. A total of 62 articles were collected. The majority of these stemmed from the American newspapers, The New York Times had by far the largest article production. After reading them through, the field was narrowed down to 51 based on the relatively broad inclusion criteria, that the article’s main focus was e-cigs, as opposed to them being mentioned in passing. The actual focus of the article in regards to e-cigs was less important, as the explorative nature of the analysis set out to discover the different topical angles.

In appendix II an overview of the 51 final articles are shown by news medium, headline and date.

VIRTUAL OUTPUT – BRAND MANUFACTURES

It is hard to compare American e-cig advertisement to Danish e-cig advertisement because of the divergence in regulations. Since e-cigs containing nicotine liquid is illegal

in Denmark, there is not much advertisement to be found. Even if the actual e-cig device is perfectly legal to advertise and sell, it does not make much point to compare the advertisement of two products, which we can only assume are bought for different reasons. And in fact Danish advertisement for e-cigs count slim to none as it is. In this case, the Internet’s explosive growth as an effective promotional medium provides opportunities for research. It is in the very nature of the Internet to be “border-crossing”, i.e. making information of content available across markets. This is an important thing to note because many Danish e-cig entrepreneurs have registered their business abroad in order to circumvent national law, by still targeting and selling nicotine liquids and e-cigs to Danes. They do this via websites. Therefore, websites are usable for comparisons with those of U.S. e-cig manufactures. Moreover, Grana & Ling (2014) argue that the internet has been, and remains, a main channel for marketing e-cigs products.

This accessibility across borders could also be considered a hindrance, because promotional messages might follow cultural differences and letting messages reflect cultural

characteristics, which can make their messages more readily acceptable to Internet users in general (Paek et al, 2009). However, since the Danish websites are written in Danish – a language not spoken in many other noteworthy countries but Denmark, it could safely be argued that they are targeted specifically to the Danish market. Furthermore, since some of the biggest e-cig brands in the U.S have established international or multinational subsidiaries, such as in the U.K – the chosen websites seem to cater for a national audience. Thus, this hindrance is not something that affects the analysis results in this study.

Six different e-cig brands were chosen, three American and three Danish. All of the brands were retrieved via search engines and the websites chosen according to below criteria. The six brands are presented in table 8. All the websites are representatives of different manufacturers. The reason behind not solely focusing on one brand is due to the wish of analyzing general discourses within advertisement of e-cigs as opposed to limiting the analysis to the rhetoric and marketing of one specific brand and manufacturer.

The inclusion criteria were as follows:

- That e-cigs may be purchased on the website.
- That the primary purpose of the website is to sell e-cigs and accessories such as e-cartridges, batteries, chargers or nicotine solutions.
- That the website has a single primary brand identity
- That the website is not a portal for multiple brands of e-cigs.
- That the website does not sell other tobacco products.

	USA	Denmark
Brand	www.blucigs.com	www.xsmoke.com
Brand	www.njoy.com	www.dansmoke.dk
Brand	www.bedfordslims.com	www.cphvapours.com

Figure 8: website data groups

Although searches were conducted in May 2015, all sites were reviewed and analyzed in June 2015. Because websites are complex in structure and content changes frequently (Grana & Ling,2014), all the website front-pages

at the time of collection have been preserved and presented in appendix I. Paek, Yu & Bae (2009) further states that the front-page serves as the gateway to the website, which makes it a good representative.

CRISCROSSING

This thesis employs a hermeneutic interaction between analysis and interpretation, where the selected theory is applied to support considerations. The analytic approach is inspired by (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). who suggests an abductive process that involves a close examination while simultaneously interpreting. The explicit focus is to highlight the prevailing discourse(s) in regards to e-cigs, and interpret the data in a social context.

To gain new information and create a unity between the different data groups all of the data was first looked upon individually. By examining each piece of data multiple times, a list of categories emerged. These were extracted and identified as part of data specific themes. Afterwards

the themes underwent a cross comparison, as compatible themes across the different data groups were marked.

The similar themes across the data groups could indicate certain discourse (as these are apparent across a selection of sources).

VALIDITY OF DATA

Neither of the data collected for the analysis has been created specifically for the purpose of this research, or any research. The data has emerged naturally and is therefore completely non-reactive to any sort of bias. That means that the possibility of a reactive effect can be largely discounted for as a limitation on the validity of the data (Bryman, 2004)´.

While the topic of the thesis is in constant movement, regulations are changing, the market is in growth etc. many factors could change the research results. This research is based on data groups that are ongoing and constantly changing. Had the comments been collected on another day or the articles been collected during another timeframe, the results might have been different. However

within a discourse analysis this is not considered a problem, because it functions with the constant underlying factor that there is no such thing as one true picture, or reality. Hence, an undertaken research will always present a fraction of time, one reality of many.





CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

4 ANALYSIS

Chapter four presents the themes recovered in the data. Each data group is analyzed in turn: User networks, media and websites. All quotes taking from a Danish context has been translated into English. To finish the chapter off, the most common themes across data groups are presented and interpreted.

CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS IN SOCIAL NETWORKS

Within both the American and the Danish network, there is a great sense of community and unity. Taking a closer look, the members bond over very different topics and have distinct relations.

FREEDOM TO VAPE

The conversation in the American network tends to be quite one-sided. The members have found a strong sense of unity fighting for the same cause: their freedom to vape. One member post their worries:

`I am concerned by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the administration's determination to involve the federal

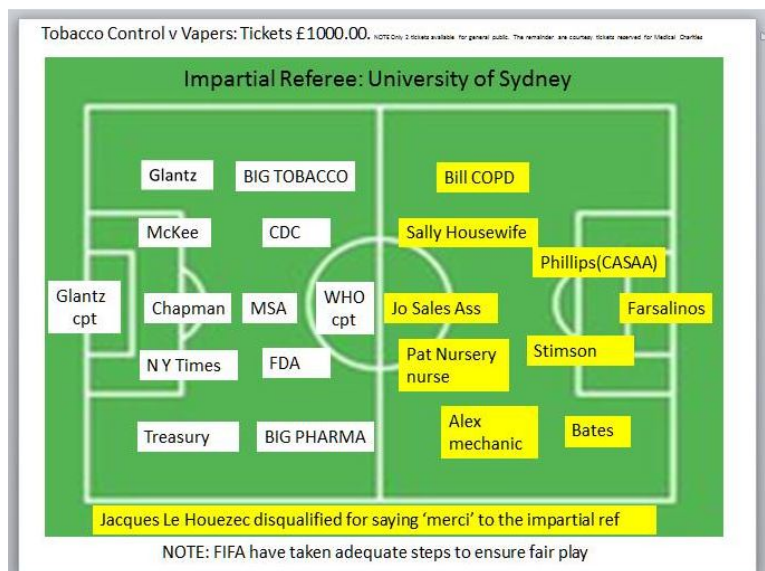
government in every aspect of Americans' lives (...)The advent of e-cigarettes, has once more raised important ethical issues—

and this time I worry that perhaps smokers' rights are being ignored (appendix I)`

This quotation is one out of many where members raise concerns about their vaping destiny being in the hands of authoritative power. In this case it is the federal government, but more often tobacco corporations are faulted.

Aggressive posts, wherein opposing sides are flaunted, often initiate the conversations. The logic in many post are that “we” (the vapers or pro-vapers) are against “them” (the state's legislations or tobacco giant's money”).

One member attempts to showcase this battle via a graphich image that illustrates a classic tactical sports lineup, where the opposing teams are made up from players representing tobacco control and vapers respectively.



In the same vein as the photo, a typical verbal outburst from a member is:

`Well if I must say! NOT that I like it or agree with it! But very simply the people or casaa dont stand a chance going up against big tobacco! They have very deep pockets and they are in the pockets of government and just about anyone they choose! And like the old saying goes... money talks and bullshit walks. Hell Bill Gates would have a tough time going against this establishment! (appendix I)´

”The people of CASAA” refers to the community in the network. In a past post other members have prompted for action and attempted to gather members with different qualifications, in order to start a strategic attempt on a pro-vaping national awareness campaign. An initiative that received an abundance of endorsement from the group.

In general, the members of the network group are very keen to take action and actively ensure that all members are up to date, by sharing articles and updates that reinforce their case on a daily basis. Moreover, members encourage each other to call for action by signing protest letters and petitions and even participating in state specific campaigns, an initiative they call “CASAA calls to action by State”. The below quotation illustrates this level of devotion:

`Something something no rest for... vapers! Today, we have three pending municipal ordinances that need our attention. Breckenridge, Inver Grove Heights and Jordan all have upcoming hearings to discuss changes to their local ordinances related to vaping.(appendix I)´

The largely aggressive and negative tone that exists in the network might derive from the feeling of being marginalized. Members repeatedly complain that other forces have the power to control their actions by law enforcement. As emphasized earlier, the members do not have great faith that they stand a chance against the federal state or tobacco corporations, yet they continue to take on the battle. It is a never-ending job to paint the opposition as the enemy, and they often do this by claiming that the other side to the story consists of lies to achieve commercial and monetary gains. The group is overflowing with conspiracy claims, such as faulty and manipulated research data and ulterior motives. The two quotes below are presented to exemplify such conspiracy beliefs.

‘Ok folks let's dive down the rabbit hole for a bit!! There was a comment made on a recent post of mine that jumped out at me because I too have thought it. It's in regards to the recent influx in what could possibly be seen as copyright infringement by mainly e-liquid companies ripping off big corporations logos.

"Is big tobacco behind it? Because they want it banned?"(appendix I)´

...

‘We all remember the experiment they did with putting flies under 2 glasses and filling 1 with tobacco smoke and the other with vapor. In Taiwan the news came out and inverted the results saying that the glass with the dead flies was from vapor! I am so angry right now I could spit fire! (appendix I)´

The first quote make out that the tobacco corporations are deliberately sabotaging e-cig marketing, while the second one seem to put blame on a research experiment that has allegedly been publishing faulty results.

EXPERIENCE EXCHANGE

Whereas the community in the American network is dominated by active debates regarding smoker's rights, freedom and battles against ongoing regulation, the Danish community seems to be built on experience exchanges and advice. The network almost bares resemblance to a support group and the majority of posts revolve around product attributes, knowledge exchange, suggestions and the occasional cry for help. One member asks the network for advice in relation to aromas:

‘Wonder if anyone can help?? Have thrown myself into the universe of mixing...and have read and read about which aromas that do not contain diacetyl, acetyl and custard notes...Doubting which are ok...when stated that butyric is used instead is that a no go??,- It is scientifically proved that liquids without aroma are far healthier than vaping on an Atlantis tank without any liquid at all ☺ So that it something to consider when NOTHING is more dangerous than SOMETHING (translated from Appendix I)’

Two things are worth considering in the above quotation. Firstly there is focus on health, which could indicate that the consumer uses it for the sake of their wellbeing, which in the case of this product would likely be as a cessation aid, a purpose never mentioned in the American network. Secondly, the member places an enormous amount of faith in science, something that the American members evidently do not. Whereas the American network consistently rejects published research on e-cigs, the Danes seem to neglect or suppress any discussion about the unknown. Very rarely do any one talk about the possibilities of e-cigs being harmful and bad press or other types of societal attacks on e-cigs are seldom reproduced. Since there is a concern for health in general but no one

really questions the health of e-cigs directly, this might be interpreted as a form of truism – i.e. that the members do not question the fact that e-cigarettes are healthy. Here one could talk about a discourse of health that is internalized in each individual. The Danish consumers are self-governing subjects in a Foucauldian sense.

In the Danish network politics and legislations are rarely discussed; there is a greater focus on the actual e-cig device, e.g. the design and the best device for specific purposes (mostly in relation to being a new vaper). When they do occasionally share articles in the network it is typically health related articles such as “are electronic cigarettes dangerous?” and it seems that they use them to find comforts in the other members’ soothing replies, as opposed to starting a heated debate. This might indicate that the Danes have accepted E-cigs as a health product, which would explain why they are keener to discuss each other’s experiences about the product and less focused on regulations.

The lack of “fighting spirit” might seem somewhat paradoxical. On the one hand the product (assuming that

the members are using liquids with nicotine) is illegal, so it might not make sense to discuss legislative innuendos amongst the users. Whereas stricter regulations in the U.S., are enforced state by state like rolling avalanches, changing everyday life as the Americans know it, which invites debate since something they once has (the freedom to vape without regulations) is taken away from them. On the other hand, there is no stopping a discussion on why e-cigs should not become legal in Denmark. If the Danish vapers are so positive that e-cigs are healthy and work as efficient cessation aids, should they not be fighting to make it legal, more common and hence easier to purchase?

Again this bares resemblance to a support group, a strong community where vapers find other likeminded to confide in. This strong tie is emphasized by an enormous interest in the other members. One member frequently posts pictures of his device followed by the question 'what are you vaping on today?'. Another member refers to his devices as family, as he posts the shown picture with the words 'The family is together for an evening in.'



SUM UP – USER GROUPS

The two user groups both function as a place where vapers interact and share experiences from the basis of the same product. Yet, as seen, the two groups have grown to contain very different discussions and relations. In the American group the members were worried about ongoing regulation that would limit their right to vape in the future and hence take some of their freedom away from them. In

the Danish community the tone was much lighter and the members had pleasant conversations about product attributes and gave each other advice. What was similar in the two groups was that e-cigs was perceived as harmless. In the Danish group the avoidance of talking about potential health issues with the e-cigs indicated that there was a common acceptance and agreement that there was not any worries. In the American group members were strident about e-cigs not being harmful and used pervasive arguments and theories to indicate to the other members which side they were on.

CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS IN MEDIA

While the focus on consumer freedom and personal autonomy within the data from the U.S usergroup is soaring, the emphasis on health is less prominent. Conversely, health is found to be a major theme in the American media data.

PLAYING IT SAFE

The health thematic is expressed through a variety of different entry points, which all can be placed under a general health discourse. One of the frequently used arguments is that history will repeat itself, i.e. that we are seeing the same pattern unfold, as we did back in the 60s with tobacco cigarettes.

‘companies vying for a stake in the e-cigarette business have revived marketing tactics that helped hook generations of Americans on regular smokes (Appendix II,A16)’

These tactics allegedly include the marketing of e-cigs, in ways that targets teens, which is one of the major recurring concerns in American media.

‘e-cigarettes have so far escaped federal regulation and are being promoted using the same playbook cigarette companies have used to addict generations of teenagers, the egregious and aggressive marketing of e-cigarettes to teenagers threatens to make smoking cool again (Appendix II,A4)’

New York Times had several articles devoted to this topic alone, as demonstrated in Appendix II, articles such as A2,

A12, B4 and B6 are just an extract of the articles that put underage e-cig usage in the limelight. In the article from The New York Times, 'Use of e-cigarettes rises sharply among teenager'(appendix I,A7), the journalist proclaims that e-cigs have arrived in the life of the average American teenager.

'Kenny, a high school senior in Weston, Fla., likes to puff e-cigarettes during study sessions with friends after school. James, a senior in Fauquier County, Va., uses them outside at lunch with friends who do smoke tricks. Tom, a sophomore from Westchester County, uses them while hiking with friends. E-cigarettes have arrived in the life of the American teenager.'

It seems to be a common assumption that teenagers are being misled into believing that e-cigs are safe and use them for pleasure, rather than as a potential cessation aid. The most frequent argument for this is the wide variety of flavors, with names often appealing to youngsters. This is showcased in the following quotation:

'Concern about e-cigarettes grew after a different government study in December found some teens who'd never smoked a real cigarette were trying out the electronic kind. Adolescents

could be easily enticed by many of the flavors of e-cigarettes, including chocolate, vanilla, banana, cherry and strawberry, which sounds a lot like the menu in my local frozen yogurt store (Appendix II, A14).'

Also in the article from The Wall Street Journal 'E-cigarette, Hookah Use rises among U.S. teens as cigarette use falls'(B9), the flavors are mentioned as means to attract children.

'We don't need another generation of smokers, and we certainly don't need more ways for kids and teenagers to be exposed to and hooked on nicotine.

The manufacturers of e-cigarettes should be prohibited from marketing to children and creating flavors that he says are designed to appeal to kids (Appendix II,B9)'

The quotation from the A7 article also demonstrates a variety of situations where teens use e-cigs. Using e-cigs as a social activity is also something that is frequently discussed in the media data. Amongst other things, it is noted that teens are learning tricks from each other and from exposure on social media:

‘Teens said their favorite tricks include something called the “dragon,” in which vapor is exhaled from both nostrils and sides of their mouth. They learn the tricks from each other or by watching online videos with demonstrations set to popular music (Appendix II,A2)’

A young teenage boy is used as a source claiming that e-cigarettes had become almost as common at school as laptops while stating, “It’s the healthy alternative taking over my school (appendix I,A7)”. Some schools have responded to this “healthy alternative” by making punishments for e-cig possession on school premises stronger than if caught with regular cigarettes. Most schools have folded e-cigs into their anti-tobacco policies, typically punishing students with detention and even a tobacco education class (appendix II, A16).

Quite a few articles direct anger towards the tobacco industry, implying that their marketing tactics are getting another generation hooked. It seems that the tobacco giants’ entry into the world of e-cigs has not gone by unnoticed by the American public. Somehow tobacco cigarettes seems ubiquitous. Focus is rarely on questioning

the health of actual e-cigs, but more so on concern of whether the use of e-cigs will lead back to tobacco usage. In this type of argumentative logic, e-cigs are portrayed as a so called gate-way to addiction.

‘Frieden said e-cigarettes are a new way of introducing kids to nicotine — and potentially hooking them on tobacco products in the future."Is this a gateway in? Or a pathway out? We don't know," Many experts worry that the aggressive marketing of e-cigarettes, the latest gimmick to create and maintain an addiction to nicotine, could ultimately assure a healthy market for real cigarettes decades hence (appendix II, A4).

The above interposed phrase ‘the latest gimmick to create and maintain an addiction to nicotine’ again quesitons the motives behind e-cigs as a product and contributes to the idea that e-cigs are a manipulative tool, rather a solution orientated innovation.

Even though the majority of these subthemes of health show a negative perception of e-cigs, it it commonly accepted in most cases that e-cigs are healthier than tobacco cigarettes. The below quotations illustrate this:

`[E-cigs] have the potential to wean a vast number of smokers off cigarettes. No burned tobacco leaves, no cancer-causing tar: a public health revolution in waiting (appendix II, A24).´

...

`There've been theories and ideas around the fact that e-cigarettes may be helpful from a harm reduction perspective in helping people who are already on cigarettes (that) have had trouble quitting actually get off cigarettes, A study last year found smokers who switch to e-cigarettes to try to kick their tobacco habit are more likely to succeed in quitting or cutting down than users of nicotine patches (appendix II,A19).´

Other articles present a more realistic bid, where the emphasis is not on specific health attributes in the e-cig, but more so on the fact that it is an alternative to smoking that is not as harmful. Yet, consumers should still be wary.

`Most anti-tobacco campaigners agree that e-cigarettes should be regulated. But some believe they deserve a lighter touch than tobacco because they can help smokers quit, and may be less harmful than smoking

"A heavy smoker has a 20 times greater risk of lung cancer," Yach said. "Switch to e-cigarettes and that risk is virtually going to zero (appendix II,A10).´

...

`The F.D.A. should allow companies to tell smokers about the benefits of switching to vaping products. Labels could read: "While more research is needed, it is likely that e-cigarettes meeting F.D.A. interim safety guidelines are much safer than smoking. "Such minimal standards are overdue. The longer it takes the F.D.A. to set them, the longer smokers risk confusion about the virtues of switching — and keep inhaling deadly smoke (appendix II,A24).´

One article quotes a scientific research that gives another picture than the ones painted above.

´A report last year in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine showed that while nearly 85 percent of smokers believed that e-cigarettes were safer than cigarettes in 2010, that number had dropped to 65 percent in 2013.´

This quotation goes against the dominant idea of e-cigs as healthier than tobacco cigarettes. If this report shows a true picture, it strongly suggests that Americans have other

incentives for buying the product than using them as a healthier alternative or a cessation aid. Earlier on we established that the number of vapers increased significantly during exactly that same period (2010-2013). If more and more people vape while fewer and fewer believe that vaping is healthier than smoking what are the motives behind vaping then?

This question might be answered by another recurring theme in the American media. Namely, e-cigs as part of a lifestyle. In other words, vaping as a social need, as opposed to vaping as a functional need.

PLAYING IT COOL

As mentioned in the introduction, American e-cig manufactures use the likes of celebrity endorsement and cultural sponsorships in order to brand their product. Product innovation also paves the way for social functions in relation to smoking, by turning the device into music players or even communicative tools for meeting fellow vapers. Also in fashion, the e-cig has made its mark, by associative marketing and by turning the actual e-cig

device into an accessory that can largely be designed and personalized by consumers. In the American media indications that e-cig are associated with lifestyle are also present.

In article A7 a certain e-cig type is projected as a modern successful individual:

‘E-cigarettes appeal less towards the stereotypical longhaired stoners, and more towards sweatshirt-blue-jeans Silicon Valley programmer’ (...) “You can compare them to Apple computers.’

The attempt to describe a certain type of e-cig user, or at least the lifestyle of such one sends a strong signal about the e-cig as a product that is bought to shape ones image as opposed to being a health related purchase.

Moreover, the novelty in being able to pick and mix different flavors and designs to match your personality can be compared to picking out pieces for a wardrobe or refurbishing your home. The affinity for choice is something that the vape shops have caught on to:

‘Open systems are often sold in vape shops and lend an edgy, do-it-yourself creativity to the vaping community (appendix II, A10)’

The open systems referred to is when consumers are able to mix liquids and batteries to vary taste and their nicotine intake and is a way of creating unique experiences.

The ability to personalize both look and experience is something that attracts the American consumer according to the media date.

‘Students liked the mix-and-match accessories that a user could “personalize and call your own” (appendix II, A7)’

E-cigs are not only used to cement style and personality. They are also used as an active activity. As previously stated, teens play with the device in their school breaks and take them hiking. A popular activity, some refer to it as a sport, goes under the name of ‘cloud chasing’. It is an American phenomenon, a contest initiated by vape shop owners as an attempt to attract customers. The rules are simple; the contestants compete over who is able to create the biggest vape cloud. And the concept is growing big. This is exemplified in the following quotations:

‘[another article] glorifies competitive vaping as the newest entrant in the extreme-sports category (...) The industry is blowing up,” said Garry Rivera, the 32-year-old chief executive of Surefire Vapor and organizer of the inaugural World Series of Vape, which he is planning in Las Vegas in December. “We might as well take it to the next level.” (appendix II, B1)



‘“I don’t know that this can be a major league sport, but it can be a big deal—a televised event like professional poker,”’ (appendix, B6)’

The competitions are held all over the U.S. and are spreading overseas as well. There are sponsors, cash prizes for the winners and even a devoted audience that goes under the name of ‘cloud gazers’. Article B6 is written on the basis of having attending such an event and describes it:

‘As fans held their breath, Mr. Seybold’s cloud reached out all the way to 6 feet. Mr. Waller’s billowed out to about 5. As the judges pointed to Mr. Seybold, the crowd erupted in applause and cheers. “Sweet!” a spectator shouted. Mr. Seybold had won the first round in the Clouds for Heroes competition at the Metro Vapors vape shop (appendix II, B6)’

Contemplating the portrayed atmosphere from the above quotation there seem to be a vibrant fan culture, social cohesion and the ability to achieve success by competing eliminates any health concerns. It is tempting to think that the hard work of the e-cig marketing people has paid off in cementing e-cigs as a cultural lifestyle product, or as part of the contemporary obsession with self-design.

Associating the product with both sports and fashion might implicitly allow alternative use of the products, because the consumers are coupling their own personal interests with the signals that the product is sending.

PLAYING IT FREE

Even though the theme of freedom, which was ever present in the previous data group, is not as substantial in

this empirics group (the American media), it still exists. In article A13 a Dr. Andrew Hyland questions the motivations of e-cig smokers.

‘Are e-cigarettes a step toward a cigarette smoker getting off of cigarettes? Or are e-cigarettes a crutch so they can get nicotine in places and times when they wouldn't normally be allowed to smoke cigarettes?’ asked Dr. Andrew Hyland’

This comment of course refers to the fact that smoking (tobacco) is banned in many public buildings, workplaces, modes of transportation and bars and restaurant in the U.S. Which has angered many a smoker, who feels that a personal right has been taken from them. Denoting that vapers might choose to switch tobacco with e-cigs in order to gain this ‘personal’ right back is an indication that personal autonomy or freedom is valued high amongst the American public.

A vaper based in New Orleans expresses his appreciation of freedom in conjunction with the city’s recent smoking ban, which includes e-cigs:

‘“As other cities changed and we made no groans and moans, I thought we'd leave it alone,” (indoor smoking ban New Orleans)

"That's what made me fall in love with the city," he said. "That freedom. Cigarettes shouldn't be on the market if you can't smoke them where you want to (appendix II, A5)."

Furthermore, as the proposal for the new FDA regulations were reviewed and abundance of comments and rejections were received. Several different articles mention this incident.

"It's not that the F.D.A. has been idle. Last year it proposed a "deeming rule" — in effect, a blueprint for a regulatory framework for e-cigarettes. But given the avalanche of public comments (more than 135,000) and the importance Instead of waiting years to develop burdensome regulations, the F.D.A. should act now by setting interim safety guidelines. These guidelines would not carry the force of law, but they could go far to bolster smokers' confidence that a safer way to inhale nicotine exists (appendix II, A24)."

The above quotation indicates that the amount of rejections raised were surprising, but also that they had an affect. Another quotation mentions as a digression, that all comments must be reviewed before taking a further step. That is 135.000 comments.

"The agency received more than 135,000 public comments on the proposal and by law must review them all. (Proposal for new FDA regulations) (appendix II, A22)"

Lastly, an abundance of articles cover different aspects of legislation and heralded prohibitions. Even though the implicit tone in the majority of the articles suggest a supportive attitude towards strict law enforcement, the very presence and volume of articles covering the regulative speculations in regards to e-cigs, indicates that the topic is very present in the public domain, a suspicion which is enforced when looking at the U.S. network group.

PLAYING IT SAFER(R)

In Danish media health seems to be the paramount focus. Generally speaking most articles questions the health claims and advice the public to think twice, because little is known about potential consequences of vaping.

A lot of people think that e-cigarettes are safe, and they feel fine after having used e-cigarettes for a year. But the danger with e-

cigarettes – if there is any – won't be visible until 10 to 15 years, when potential side effects will start to show amongst chronic users (appendix II, D5).`

The harmful attributes of nicotine is not presence to the same degree as in the American media. Most likely because it is not legal. But it could also be considered as another testimony to the American view that the e-cig in itself is not the villain, more so its bi-function as a potential gateway to addiction. Conversely in Danish media, there seem to be plenty of concerns about the potential harm of the e-liquids.

`So far nicotin has been accused of being harmful, but new research actually shows that even the nicotin free e-cig liquids contain several hazardous chemicals (appendix II, C1).`

...

`Chemical has been found in liquids and vapour, up until now there have been no control over contents and who produces it. We know from measurements that some of the liquids contained carcinogens substances (appendix II, C6).`

The worrying on the danger of the chemicals might suggest that Danish consumers purchase e-cigs for health reasons. It is also often hinted that many consumers have switched from traditional cigarettes to e-cigs as a means of cessation aid or healthier alternative.

`If you have quit ciggies in favor of e-cigarettes, you might think that it is a step in the right direction. But new research shows that the carcinogen substance, formaldehyde, found in traditional cigarettes, is also existent in electronic ones (appendix II, D5)`

Even though above quotation calls for caution, it is unmistakably addressed to former smokers and thereby indirectly appreciating the e-cigs status as a cessation aid. The below quotation is more positive towards e-cigs in general, but mostly stresses its virtues as a means to get off the tobacco.

`I am convinced that there are health and social gains by getting even more smokers away from tobacco smoke. Much indicates that the health risks they expose themselves to when vaping on e-cigarettes is far less than the risk of cigarette smoking (appendix II, D1).`

Even though nicotine is illegal, much suggests that e-liquids containing nicotine is still prevailing on the Danish market. This is especially because the emphasis on nicotine addiction is often used as the example of why people are able to quite normal cigarettes and substitute them with e-cigs. If these did not contain nicotine, why would they be highlighted as efficient methods to quit tobacco cigarettes? The following quote directly mentions nicotine as the only addictive ingredient from conventional cigarettes:

‘Approximately 270,000 Danes are estimated to vape on e-cigarettes, and there is much suggesting that an overwhelming majority of them are smokers who really wish to quit smoking but cannot quit tobacco smoke immediately, because they are dependent on nicotine (Appendix II, D1).’

Moreover, a debate, similar to the one in the American Media, about teen usage is also found in the Danish media. Yet, the focus is again not on nicotine (teens getting addicted to nicotine), but more on normalizing the act of smoking. However, this might still indicate that there is a similar fear of e-cigs being a gateway to addiction as seen

in the American media. The Danish Newspaper Politiken published an article called ‘The government wants to forbid e-cigarettes to young adults’ (appendix I, C6) [Listed with original titel: *Regeringen vil forbyde e-cigaretter til unge*] In the article, the Danish minister of health declared that:

‘“I can not let go of the idea that when smoking e-cigarettes, you learn to smoke, and there is no reason to equip children with a training tool”(…)“There is no doubt that there is a need for stricter rules, especially to prevent children and young people from starting. It is a product that appeal to them with many different flavor aromas. We have also seen that a lot of children and young people has started using e-cigarettes, without previously having smoked regular cigarettes before’ (appendix II, C6).’

Even though some of the same themes are detected in both the Danish and the American media, certain twists to the topics are present, such as exemplified by the case of focusing on normalizing versus addiction in teen usage. In general there is a greater focus on the health of the individual in a Danish context. As an example, take the American media that covered e-cig user’s protests when reinforcing new rules. They felt that rights were taken from

them and that they themselves should have the freedom to choose. When a new legislative proposal, heralding stricter e-cig laws, was proposed. In Danish media, the way that the e-cig communities protests was projected, bared resemblance to the ways that their American counterparts protested, e.g. by petitions and protest letters. Yet, the Danish protest arguments were focused on health as opposed to rights.

‘Right now there are over 500 inquiries to the Minister of Health on the Danish Parliament website. They all come from vapers, users of e-cigarettes, who are unhappy with a new bill from the health minister Nik Haekkerup (S), which in many ways will equate the electronic cigarettes with ordinary cigarettes. "It may well be that the e-cigarette should not exactly be considered healthy, but I feel so much better after I switched to them," wrote an e-cigarette user among other things, in a submission. For her and many others, the e-cigarette has been crucial in their smoking stop. Which is exactly why they believe that it is a mistake to equate them with ordinary cigarette (appendix II, C3)‘

In the same vein, the talk about e-cigs being harmful seems to differ overall.

In the Danish media there is great curiosity to understand why they are harmful. In one article the journalist visits the actual research facility and describes the process of research.

‘All the Scientists in the room are wearing white painter suits that cover them from head to toe, so their shadows on the stainless steel walls look like ghosts in the vapor cloud. Professor Torben Sigsgaard breaks the silence. "I feel a tightness in the chest," he said, adding a, that it's hard to say what it means for his experience that he can see and smell the steam. He is a scientist, and the experience of chest tightness is not near a scientific proof that passive e-vaping is problematic - of course (Appendix II, C2).‘

When talking about or questioning health issues in the American media it is almost always in relation to changing regulations and never with the focus of improving the product. In general it could be said that the Danish media addresses the consumer and advice them to think about the potential dangers, whereas the American media more

often present arguments that are aimed at the system. Again this might be due to the different law landscape. It would be pointless to appeal to the Danish system for stricter law enforcement, when it is already sternly regulated. It makes more sense to appeal to the users, who are already forced to take detours in order to get their hands on the “efficient” cessation aid.

SUM UP - MEDIA

In the previous two empirics groups certain topic focus show signs of a tendency towards different patterns in the American and Danish Society respectively. While the e-cigs seem to mean different things to different consumers in the U.S.; a way to participate in sports, a trigger to fight for personal rights, an accessory, a cessation aid etc., the Danes mainly view the product as a cessation aid. This explains the intense focus on health and the absence of any interest in more lifestyle related topics.

Where the topic of health certainly existed in much data both in the U.S. usergroup and in the U.S. media, the data mainly testified a sceptism towards negative research, All the Danish data showed a more accepting attitude towards

research. An explanation for the more positive approach as witnessed amongst Danes could be that e-cigs are less commercial (the e-cig manufactures are independent, whereas many U.S e-cig entrepreneurs are acquired by tobacco corporations). A recurring theme, in a U.S. context, is ulterior motives from the tobacco industry. This was evident in three different ways: (I) concerns that the tobacco industry want to sabotage business for the e-cigs. Earlier on an example of using logos, which could possibly infringe on existing copyrights with the potential of compensation claims resulting in fiscal damage, was given. (II) That big tobacco has an interest in getting consumers hooked on nicotine, for the possibility of increasing sales for normal cigarettes in the long term and (III) by encouraging sterner regulations in order to enforce fees and approval certifications, which smaller corporations will not be able to afford. This was perceived as a way to eliminate competition. The same kind of politics are not seen on the Danish market, which is most likely due to the laws against nicotine.

CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS ON E-CIGS WEBSITES

Attention is now turned to the third data group. This is particularly interesting since this data show how e-cigs are marketed in the two countries. The following is a cross analysis, comparing the Danish and American websites, searching for differences and similarities. The front page of each brand website can be found in appendix III.

While both Bedford Slims and Njoy are independent e-cig companies Blu is owned by Imperial Tobacco Group. Design wise all three American brands have a distinct coherent layout, clean cut, nice on the eye with a modern feel and quality pictures. Both Blu (appendix III,A) and Njoy (appendix III,B) showcase their ready-to-sell products in packet design on the front page, whereas Bedford Slims (appendix III,C) have devoted most of their front page to one large picture of an attractive young male sitting outside in nature with his dog, smoking a slim e-cig – a Bedford Slim. The picture is almost the epitome of what freedom looks like, an ongoing theme on the Bedford Slim website and one that is also a big part of the Blu brand. To Blu freedom is ever present. A tagline on the front-page reads,

“more choice gives you more freedom”. The tag line can be interpreted with a dual meaning. It refers directly to the vast assortment of flavors and products that the customer is presented too, but it also taps into Blu’s additional branding activities, herein their ‘take your freedom back’ campaign. This campaign is unmistakably targeted to the feeling of personal autonomy that was quite evident in American society from looking at the other data groups. ‘Take your freedom back’ encourages consumers to buy e-cigs and be able to smoke everywhere, like they once could with normal cigarettes, before the smoking ban. With this campaign the Imperial Tobacco Group might be showing their faces, by selling e-cigs as an alternative to smoking without putting smoking in a bad light. They encourage consumers to take on the battle against federal law, which speaks to the American consumer’s sense of liberty and personal rights. A running add from the campaign is pictured below.



(Waters, 2014)

Blu also plays on popular commercial culture, social stigma and lifestyle. The brand use an abundance of celebrity endorsers, such as ex playboy model Jenny McCartney and actor Stephen Storff. Both of whom are featured in national television adds. Jenny McCartney is featured talking to the camera, whilst occasionally flirting with the man sitting next to her in a posh bar. She is simultaneously smoking a Blu e-cig. Her monologue is partly transcribed below.

Blu satisfy me. (...) no ash, no odor, which also means that I don't get the stink eyes from others, also it doesn't make my

hair smell, my teeth yellow, you get the idea. (...) Now that I've switched to Blu I feel better about myself. And I feel free to have one almost anywhere. When I am driving, at home watching TV, or when I am in the club. And no going out in the rain or freezing my butt off just to take a puff. I can whip out my Blu and not worry about scaring that special someone away. Finally with Blu, I took back my freedom.¹

The advert plays on social attributes, mainly by sex appeal, and presents e-cigs as a way to escape awkward situations where being a smoker means that you are a nuisance to others. Hence, having the *freedom* to smoke wherever you want without worrying about social stigma. The advert and campaign project the optimal individual who doesn't compromise with anyone or anything.

Njoy, also plays with the freedom theme, in a slightly different way. On their front-page a big banner states 'independent from tobacco' - this off course is a clear attempt to distance their brand from any distrust that we previously saw associated with tobacco companies. In fact their mission is to 'obsolete combustible cigarettes

¹ The advert can be seen via

completely`. The statement can also be read as 'independent from others, period`, thereby linking ties to personal autonomy and liberty.

Njoy has a slightly more edgy profile than Blu and their choice of stating INDEPENDENT in capitals on their front-page does not seem coincidental. They tap into indie cultures, by collaborations with underground artist and by teaming up with a more rebellious celebrity profile; the musician Courtney Love. In a national TV advert, Courtney Love is portrayed smoking an Njoy e-cig inside a posh opera house. An older snobbish lady approaches her, clearly appalled by her behavior, and tells her that smoking is forbidden. To this Courtney Love coldly replies "Relax it's a fucking Njoy"¹¹. The advert expresses independence and suggests that no one can tell you what to do, a message that could be well received by a target group of libertarians who are willing to fight for their personal autonomy. But also by a target group of rebellious teenagers, an

¹¹ The advert can be seen via <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ri0gRkz7DeM>

audience e-cig marketing are targeting as suggested by American media.

The Blu- and the Bedford Slims websites also seem to target a younger audience. Blu makes implicit music references, by referring to their products as 'the blu line-up` - an expression typical used for the acts performing at a concert or a festival. Moreover, they encourage consumers to join the Blu community, by becoming Blu 'fans`. Bedford Slims targets youth by their verbal communication, use of slang and a younger tongue in cheek style. Headlines for their different product assortment counts 'Get your shit together` and 'the juice is loose`.

Additionally, both sites present video material with a fun easy going vibe. Both videos are featured within the respective company's' premises, albeit Blu's video has a more authentic style, whereas Bedford Slims' is set in a fictive and mythical universe. While Blu's video does not come off as particular commercial, presenting the Blu employees as part of a 'brain freeze challenge' and thus sending a familiar

and inviting message, the Bedford Slims video has a different storyline. The video portrays an actor (supposedly the CEO), who takes the viewer on a tour of the fictional premises whilst vaping and stating facts and information about the Bedford Slim Product. For instance implying that Bedford Slims are much healthier than cigarettes:

‘While conventional cigarettes contain over 800 chemicals, Bedford Slims contain only 7 none-toxic-ingredients and cost less than a pack of cigarettes’

Note how the ingredients are referred to as chemicals when they are in association with cigarettes, but when associated with Bedford Slims (e-cigs) ingredients are renamed ‘none-toxic-ingredients’.

Taking a closer look at the Danish websites, the immediate impression is quite different. The Xsmoke website layout is much less playful and come off as more clinical than the American websites’ excess of colors and tight coherent design. It almost resembles an online shop of multiple products as opposed to a

solo brand website. All three websites seem to be targeted to smokers. Everything is geared towards switching from cigarettes to e-cigs. Both Xsmoke and Dansmoke have a function where customer’s can calculate their yearly savings based on how many cigarettes they smoke a day, if they switch to e-cigs.

Just comparing brand names suggest that the national brands serve different purposes with similar products. Xsmoke indicates that smoke is part of the past, or something which one tries to cross out, i.e. saying no to smoke when choosing Xsmoke. Njoy on the other hand is a play on the word ‘enjoy’, signaling pleasure and satisfaction – adjectives often used on the American Websites. Dansmoke’s tagline is ‘quit playing with fire’, which is also a call to leave smoking behind, whilst simultaneously using a proverb that is used to describe something dangerous, i.e. indirectly saying that e-cigs are healthier than regular cigarettes.

The Danish websites do not settle with indirectly stating health claims. Dansmoke is the most

aggressive brand out of the three. And states the following:

‘DanSmoke™ Stop smoking with Dansmoke. E-cigarettes are both significantly cheaper, healthier, and tastes better than regular tobacco cigarettes’ (appendix III, E)

Furthermore, they built on their health claim, by showing a picture of a healthy looking woman, with a talk through of the health process from day 1 to 1 year post smoking.



In a similar vein to the American websites, that used videos as promotion tools on their websites, Xsmoke have chosen to utilize a video solution on their website too. This video is very different and is again not directly associated with Xsmoke as a brand, it is unclear if Xsmoke is the producer of the video or simply endorsing it on their website. The video portrays an experiment, showcasing ‘tar in airways’. The person conducting the experiment looks like a scientist and shows the amount of tar after smoking 100 tobacco cigarettes. The scientific setting sends a message of trustworthiness, seriousness and legitimacy. The scientist conducting the experiment functions as a powerful authoritative source by possessing the aforementioned legitimacy and thereby stating truths. The video is in sharp contrast to Bedford Slims’ video that is reminiscent to a commercial. In the Xsmoke video, e-cigs are not mentioned at all, it function more as a scare campaign, which indicates that Xsmoke anticipates that website visitors are smokers who are looking for a cessation aid.

An abundance of observations suggest that the Danish brands are positioning themselves as health

products, as a cessation aid. All three Danish sites put an enormous focus on their selection of start packages (packages designed to make sure new vapers have everything they need), as opposed to the American focus on package design (artist design, personal design etc.) and assortment of flavors and product types. Moreover, Xsmoke features client testimonials, which confirm how e-cigs function as the perfect means to quit cigarettes. Dansmoke also include testimonials whilst also proclaiming that '92% of everyone who tries the DanSmoke e-cigarette with nicotine, smokes significantly fewer tobacco cigarettes after only 30 days'. They even advertise and promise a 'smoking cessation warranty': If the customer has not stopped smoking tobacco cigarettes after a full 12 months continuous subscription to DanSmoke, a full refund is given.

In the FAQ sections on all the Danish websites focus is on e-cig information in general, whereas all the American websites are very brand specific, e.g. 'what is an e-cigarette?' versus 'what is an Njoy e-

cigarette?'. This taps into the Danish focus on health as opposed to the more commercial focus in the U.S.

This more general approach can be translated into the target audience as well. While it seems that the American marketing of e-cigs are focused on individual attributes and thereby targeting individuals or sub-groups by a distinctive brand and image that appeals to certain lifestyles, the Danish marketing of e-cigs are not speaking to an individual, but more a group of people who needs e-cigs to be healthier and fit into a particular culture – the need for affiliation. This is demonstrated in the different virtues of the products that the Danish and American brands choose to accentuate. Where Xsmoke states that it is now possible to smoke without endangering yourself or your surroundings (second hand smoking), Blu states that you will not suffer from any social stigma, such as bad breath, which in turn enable you to attract 'that special someone'. In other words whilst the Danish brands emphasize a community feeling where health concerns of harming yourself or your surroundings serve as the dominant

picture and main selling point, the American brands highlight a desirable product by putting the individual in charge. Portraying a world where the individual is able to get everything he or she put their minds to.

SUM UP

The above analysis of the different data groups showed signs of specific themes that were quite distinct to both The U.S. and Denmark. Some of the themes were dominant to the extent that they were evident across data groups, which could indicate a tendency to specific societal discourses that has manifested itself across sources. As discussed previously, health is a recurring theme that has its presence in some form or another throughout data groups, regardless of them being Danish or American. The health theme in a Danish context take shape as a concern for public health – either by positioning e-cigs as a potential means to get healthy or by embedding uncertainty about the unknown dangers into the public stories about the e-cig product. The American Health theme is colored by a sense of paranoia, where the question of health in itself it not the essential, but where

claims about health becomes a tool to justify behavior, fight authoritative decisions and cultivate individualism.

In the American Data the dominant recurring theme was freedom, which permeated the pervasive ideas about e-cigs. This sense of freedom came across both on a legislative level, as an ongoing battle to achieve personal autonomy, but also as a more hidden agenda, where the emphasis on lifestyle signified the individual's need for self-promotion and design. In the Danish data freedom was not found to be a recurring theme.

Which factors then could lead to such different dominant discourses? Although a classic discourse analysis would not be interested in the underlying factors of *why* something is happening, but rather focus on determining *what* is happening, this thesis shows its true colors by only taking inspiration from discourse analysis and providing an attempt on interpretations in the following.

ILLUMINATING DIFFERENCES

As we established earlier in chapter two, Hofstede bound distinctive traits, in connection to the notion of masculinity

and femininity, to the U.S and Denmark respectively. Attributes bound to femininity such as taking care of each other, affiliation and having a sense of respect for municipal decisions made for ‘the good of all’, are all qualities that are associated with the modern day welfare state. We can all appreciate that Denmark is a nation that is principally dominated by individualism. But the femininity dimension stands in opposition to a particular way of thinking about individualism, ways that resemble the qualities of Hostede’s masculinity dimension, such as personal success and self-promotion. The following delivers an account of the noted differences between the U.S. and Denmark by using Foucault’s ideas of power and control.

THE SELF-DEFENSE OF THE WELFARE STATE

The welfare state has always had a keen interest in promoting and optimizing public health, where disease is a threat. The more contemporary ideas of being healthy stands in opposition to being unhealthy as opposed to being ill. This distinction makes it easier to install more health-oriented values, the ideal of living a healthy life by

e.g. exercising, eating properly and quitting cigarettes etc. Health political strategies in welfare states are said to be two-sided (Schwartz, 2013). On the one hand authorities appeal for the individual subject to develop skills and attributes in regards to keeping healthy, whilst on the other hand urging citizens to obedience and respect for authorities, by adjusting to the normative rules and legislations. These control strategies are reminiscent to Foucault’s concept of governmentality and disciplinary power, which were presented in chapter two. Governmentality unites intentional government control, i.e. a form of active control interventions such as legislation with a more hidden and embedded form of control, that is implemented in the minds of the people as specific control mechanisms – self-governance. Vallgård (2003), claims that this implicit power may appeal to the wish of being perceived as a good citizens who takes responsibility for themselves and their country, in short; contributes to creating of a caring society, a welfare state. When this control is directly targeted at health it is commonly referred to as bio-power (Schwartz, 2003). Unlike disciplinary power, which targets the individual subject, bio-power is

focused on improving the biomass and the wellbeing of the population collectively. Furthermore bio-power is aimed toward the environment, where it attempts to equip and organize the materiality of the world in which the population exists. Where death commonly represented the ultimate power, death in a bio-political sense becomes an expression of limits to power and everything possible is done to extend the transience of life. Thus, control of public behavior is not limited to political power, but also the normative effect that derives from the cultural environment, where e.g. media can be prominent.

As a welfare state, Denmark has realized that smoking accounts for numerous risks to society. Long-term research has established that citizens who are non-smoking are healthier and suffers from fewer diseases caused by smoking (Sobell,1990). Therefore there is a bio-political gain for the Danish welfare state to stimulate people's ability to quit smoking. Smoking is not perceived as private; it is a social issue and an object for medical science. Although e-cigs are positioned as a cessation aid, the uncertainty about its long-term side effects as well as increasing research indicating that the products might not

be as healthy as initially perceived, causes a reluctance. The government has taken on active control interventions by setting strict legislation and forbidding a potentially harmful product on the Danish market. This measurement can be comparably as an attempt to improve the biomass of the Danish population.

Although, it might seem contradictory that the individual then goes against state regulations, and hence authoritative control, by purchasing nicotine filled e-cigs from neighboring countries, it makes sense within a bio-political realm. This might indicate that the dominant health discourse is internalized in the individual to the degree that self-governing is taking place. One of the discourses in the Danish society was found to be that e-cigs are perceived as healthier than cigarettes. Consumers are actively reproducing the 'truths' about e-cigs as a cessation aid. The truth put forward by a manufacturer or a marketer as part of a discourse of e-cigs being a healthier choice than tobacco cigarettes. The uncertainty is therefore drowned by the hegemonic discourse of optimizing public health, which in turn eliminates the power of legal prevention. This is confirmed by the fact that manufacturers market e-cigs

to a much narrower target group than we saw in the U.S, namely directly to smokers as shown via the Danish websites. The Danish citizens are not interested in e-cigs as a product for anything else than a means to getting healthy and following normative behavior. This is also emphasized by public debate, which largely acknowledges the products as a cessation aid by addressing it as such and accentuating e-cigs as being 'the healthy alternative', albeit not healthy as a stand alone product. Lastly the caring nature of the conversations within the user group stresses the dedication to overcome the unhealthy lifestyle and simultaneously promises social rewards as being accepted and acknowledged as part of a group of 'good civilians'.

THE LIBERAL DILEMMA

Of course bio-politics is not exclusively a welfare state phenomenon. But in an outright liberal state, such as U.S, it has difficult conditions. The tension between bio-power and the Liberal governmentality exist in the bio-political imperative, that society and its moral character needs to be adjusted to optimize life, opposed to the rationality of

liberalism that seeks to limit regulation of society as much as possible (Lemke, 2001). In a liberal society the constant battle between the risk posed by the individual freedom on the one hand, and the mechanisms that are required in order to minimize the risks of restricting that freedom on the other. If the government has defined the individual lifestyle as a public health problem, but also has identified the individual lifestyle as a domain, which falls outside the scope of regulation, it sets a critical limitation for bio-political opportunities to optimize population health.

This dilemma is immediate apparent in the fact the e-cigs are legal. But it is also evident in the ever-present incoherence between increasing state-by-state legislation, yet an overall absence of legislation on a federal level. The tentative approach to federal legislation, where new preventive legislation periodically is warranted -yet fails to be employed, could be an indication of the bio-powers' tough terms in the realm of libertarians.

Indeed the data did not show the e-cig positioned as a cessation aid as we saw in the Danish data. The overall focus was on regulation dilemmas, and when the actual

product did come into focus it seemed to be positioned as a multifunctional product that in turn could play a part in the self-design of the individual. The concept of self-promotion is also an interpretation of personal freedom. Individuals have the empowerment to make the choices that affect their own lives. In such a setting, e-cigs has the ability to signal the distinct choices that one has made, by giving the e-cig a personal design or by choosing a brand that signals the same values as that the consumer stands for. This need for individual freedom is rooted in the obvious and numerous ways that the American manufacturers seek to position their brand to attract a range of target groups as opposed to limiting the target market to smokers.

In the above analysis, where two main themes are extracted from their cultural context, Foucault and his concepts on power largely determined the interpretation, which shows that the health discourse is strong in a Danish cultural context, whereas the freedom discourse is prominent in an American cultural context. With Foucault's concepts it is suggested that the results can be understood as the welfare state's and bio-politic's power

to optimize the health of both the individual, whereas the American context was characterized by a freedom discourse that rejects the bio-political imperative of optimizing and prolonging the life of the population.

A single analytical view is in its nature limited, hence the above should not be seen as a conclusive validation, but rather as one interpretation out of many. A study inspired by discourse analysis in itself never attempts to discover one true reality, but investigations in general are highly dependent on the theories that the researcher chooses to integrate. Before the concluding chapter of the thesis, this chapter provides another supplementary interpretation.

ONE STEP BEYOND

A crucial difference between the two markets of the U.S. and Denmark is the distinct regulations on e-cigs. The fact that e-cigs with nicotine liquids are legal to sell in the U.S. certainly entail a set of game changing factors, in relation to marketing. There is no point in marketing a forbidden product. Furthermore, the American market is riddled with politics, since the big tobacco corporations have taken

over and bought out many emergent e-cig entrepreneurs. These political entanglements have led to a distrust of any health oriented marketing efforts on the U.S market, which might have forced the brands to rethink their promotional strategies, turning their back on the e-cig as a cessation aid whilst instead positioning the e-cig as a cool accessory by showcasing innovation design features and associating e-cig with popular culture, as seen via endorsements and sponsorships. There is of course also a point for the tobacco corporations not to position the e-cig as a cessation aid, since they would potentially harm their own business.

In Denmark the same politics are not in play because the tobacco corporations do not have any interest in entering a restricted market. Yet recent developments are interesting to note. The Danish e-cig brand 'Nordik', owned by Okono^{III}, has started a collaboration with Mac Baren Tobacco – a Nordic tobacco manufacturer. Nordik is one of the few brands that has taken the consequences of regulations to heart and now solely sell their e-cig line,

^{III} Okono A/S is a Danish company manufacturing nicotine and tobacco containing non-combustible products

which do not contain nicotine. Mac Baren Tobacco is the distributor of the brand and its branding strategy is quite different to the other Danish e-cig brands.

Nordik is promoted heavily by outdoor advertising and marketing tricks. - the website is reminiscent to that of Bedford Slims inviting the consumer with a big quality photo of nature. Furthermore, their tagline seems to be a combination of retorics that were used on the Danish and the American websites. It states 'Din sikkerhed for ren nydelse', directly translated this means 'your guarantee for pure pleasure' - but the Danish interpretation has a dual function and can also be interpreted as 'Your safety for pure pleasure' - indicating that the brand has not lost sight of the importance of health. Yet, no verbs indicating 'pleasure' were detected in the other Danish brands, more so in the American. That is not where the comparisons to the American brands come to an end. Nordik also makes sure to put its brand name everywhere and never articulates e-cigs as a general product like the other Danish products do. Moreover Nordik seem to use a combination of affiliate marketing and celebrity

endorsement by out of the blue appearing on Jackie Navarro's^{IV} blog.

Might this be a coming trend? Maybe the Danish e-cig market just is not as mature as the American? Nordik might be a firstmover indicating that the American development is coming to Denmark.

A Foucault inspired analysis would not be dismissive of such interpretation. Since realities change with discourses, the existing meanings and truths about e-cigs might change over time, just as we saw a change in the discourses about conventional cigarettes.



^{IV} Jackie Navarro is a Danish reality star and former model, her blog contribution can be accessed her: <http://jackienavarro.dk/et-sundere-alternativt/>



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5 CONCLUSION

'E-cigs are cultural forms because they encapsulate ideas about the way people should behave (Cayla and Arnould, 2008)'

With this quote Cayla and Arnould could have inspired the soul of this thesis. It is fascinating to think about how much meaning products can carry as part of a discourse in a cultural context.

In the introducing chapter the thesis set out to explore differences in cross-cultural advertisement, media and public discussions on electronic cigarettes. The research was further defined as a comparison between the U.S. and Denmark in a context of discourses within their respective cultures.

Despite its relatively short life as a commercial product, it is clear that the e-cig is carrying an abundance of meanings and symbols. Nevertheless, it is not the material product in itself that conveys meaning, it is the cultural environment in which it exists that gives the e-cig its

significance. This thesis confirmed that by observing conversations between e-cigs users, exploring how e-cigs were portrayed in national media and by analyzing brand specific e-cig websites, it was possible to detect some recurring themes with tendencies to form discourses within the respective cultures.

Overall, the dominant discourses in the two cultural settings, were found to be very different. In Denmark the current hegemonic discourse of health overshadowed any other themes that emerged from time to time. While the American data showed signs of more contending discourses, a discourse of health was often suppressed by other discourses that mainly lead back to the dominant discourse of freedom for the individual.

In Denmark e-cigs are perceived as a cessation aid, and as products that are healthier than the conventional cigarettes, whereas e-cigs are perceived as different things in the U.S. Mainly e-cigs have come to exemplify an anti government movement embodying a battle between personal autonomy and authority. Moreover, some

Americans have adapted the product as a means for identity creation.

With the use of Foucault's concepts of power, it is increasingly implied that the results can be concluded as the existence of a biopolitical power within the Danish society. The Danish welfare model serves to enforce this bio power, by affecting the Danish culture, which in turn is internalized within the Danish citizens. Thus, explaining the coherent focus on health that was observed throughout all the Danish data groups. Whilst the existence of bio power in the U.S. cannot be neglected, currently there is a hegemonic discourse of freedom, which discards any other discourses in a number of different ways.

The current discourses about e-cigs are just a fraction of time – In ten years, our own sense of what is true or not is difficult to predict both in an American and Danish context and in any other cultural context for that matter.



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www.blucigs.com

www.njoy.com

www.bedfordslims.com

www.Xsmoke.com

www.Dansmoke.dk

www.CphVapours.com

www.Nordik-ecig.com

APPENDIX

APPENDIX I – USERGROUPS (EXTRACT)

Collected 29.05.2015

A: We are CASAA

RECENT ACTIVITY



16 hrs · Hurricane, MS, United States

VapeCon in Chattanooga started today and already idiots have vaped so much in their hotel rooms to set the fire alarms off in some of the hotels. This is not a good image for the vaping world.

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#)

7 people like this.

1 share

3 of 105

 Is west the one that's more a business to business convention? I do remember one like that looking more respectful. I'm not really looking for any. I try to avoid crowds.

33 mins · [Like](#) · [2](#)

 No it's more of a old school Vape meet style. More about the people than the products.

31 mins · [Like](#) · [3](#)

 I've attended about a dozen big events over the last 3 years. I prefer the "old fashioned" style vape meets, where I get to know and relax with other vapers, swap tales, learn to get more satisfaction from my vape, effective vaping advocacy and safety...[See More](#)

22 mins · [Like](#) · [1](#)

B: E-cigaret Denmark



6 hrs

SmagsTest af de nye væsker fra "Badlands Eliquids" !!

I første omgang "Dr. Deminger" serien, i samarbejde med JunkieDonkey Himself [grin](#)

[emotion](#)

[please enjoy](#) ^^



Badlands - Smagstest af Dr. Derringer serien

JunkieDonkey & LimeGuy Tar på smags eventyr i BADLANDS !! I første omgang "Dr. Derringer" serien. Lidt på den lange side, men det var vigtigt vi fik det h...

YOUTUBE.COM

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#)

31 mins · [en](#) likes this

[View 2 more comments](#)

 Til dels enig...

Jeg vil dog sige at jeg selv har set MANGE smagstest's af væsker før jeg køber dem, for at sporer

APPENDIX II – NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Sourced between 01.01.2015 – 29.05.2015

New York Times	No. of total entries	Within timeframe
	10267	25
Date and Titles		
	A1: May 26, 2015 <i>Smoking, vaping and nicotine</i>	
	A2: May 1, 2015 As youth vaping rises, teens cite the allure of tricks	
	A3: April 23, 2015 <i>The perils of smokeless tobacco</i>	
	A4: April 23, 2015 <i>It's time to regulate e-cigarettes</i>	
	A5: April 21, 2015 <i>New Orleans going smoke-free in bars, other public places</i>	
	A6: April 17, 2015 <i>Youth e-cigarette data prompts new calls to speed regulation</i>	
	A7: April 17, 2015 <i>Use of e-cigarettes rises sharply among teenagers</i>	

A8: April 16, 2015

Study: High school smoking fell as e-cigarette use boomed

A9: March 26, 2015

U.S. ad campaign points to dangers of dual cigarette/e-cig use

A10: March 23, 2015

Special report: When it comes to e-cigs, big tobacco is concerned for your health

A11: March 18, 2015

Washington state mulls steep tax, other restrictions on e-cigarettes

A12: March 2, 2015

U.S. minors easily buy e-cigarettes online: UNC study

A13: February 27, 2015

Study: smokers may tap into multiple sources for nicotine

A14: February 23, 2015

Need to curtail smoking becomes more acute as its known dangers widen

A15: February 17, 2015

Vape 'em if you got 'em: jails sell e-cigarettes to inmates

A16: February 15, 2015
Schools start treating e-cigarettes as drug paraphernalia

A17: January 28, 2015
Things to know about potential e-cigarette health concerns

A18: January 28, 2015
California declares electronic cigarettes a health threat

A19: January 27, 2015
Surgeon general: 'desperate need of clarity' on e-cigarettes

A20: January 27, 2015
Is vaping worse than smoking?

A21: January 26, 2015
E-cigarettes would be banned in public places under California bill

A22: January 23, 2015
Regulating e-cigarettes

A23: January 21, 2015
Lab tests imply formaldehyde risk in some e-cigarette vapor

A24: January 19, 2015
Will the F.D.A. kill off e-cigs?

A25: January 16, 2015
GSK's nicotine patches and gum feel the heat from e-cigarettes

The Wall Street Journal		
Date and Titles		
No. of total entries	Within timeframe	
(20)	13	
B1: June 5, 2015	Gasp: The FDA must regulate E-cigarettes	
B2: June 5, 2015	House approaches indoor ban on electronic cigarettes	
B3: April 30, 2015	Japan Tobacco to acquire U.S. Electronic Cigarette Company Logic Technology Development	
B4: April 29, 2015	Allure of E-cigarettes for the young is bad	
B5: April 26, 2015	Schumer says e-cigarette makers are marketing to children	
B6: April 22, 2015	Take a deep breath if you want to try competitive vaping	
B7: April 4, 2015	Extreme Vaping	

B8: April 17, 2015
Reynolds American, Lorillard revenue rises

B9: E-cigarette, Hookah Use rises among U.S. teens as cigarette use falls

B10: April 15, 2015
How a vaping entrepreneur approaches risk management

B11: March 26, 2015
U.S. ad campaign to challenge value of e-cigarettes in quitting smoking

B12: March 17, 2015
U.K. adds craft beer, e-cigarettes and music streaming to inflation basket

B13: March 15, 2015
E-cigarettes are an improvement for tobacco smokers

Politiken	No. of Total entries	Within timeframe
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3770	8
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Date and Titles

C1: May 29, 2015 <i>Ny forskning: nikotinfri e-cigaretter er også skadelige</i>

C2: Maj 1, 2015 <i>Test af den 'ufarlige' e-damp: Det giver en trykken for brystet</i>

C3: Marts 11, 2015
Til kamp for damp: e-cigaretbrugere stormer sundhedsministeren

C4: February 21, 2015
Gløden er gået af de elektroniske cigaretter

C5: February 20, 2015
Fakta: Hver syvende 15-årig bruger e-cigaretter

C6: February 19, 2015
Regeringen vil forbyde e-cigaretter til unge

C7: February 18, 2015
ATS: E-cigaretter min bare!

C8: February 14, 2015
Ekspert: Mindre farlige smøger kan få flere til at ryge

Berlingske Tidende	No. of Total entries	Within timeframe
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61	5
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Date and Titles

D1: May 5, 2015 <i>Kampen om dampen</i>

D2: May 2, 2015 <i>Skadelig eller ej? Forskere undersøger dampen fra e-cigaretter</i>

D3: April 14, 2015 <i>Ny rapport: e-cigaretter er skadelige for omgivelserne</i>

D4: March 23, 2015

Læger vil forbyde reklamer for e-cigaretter

D5: January 22, 2015

Forskere finder høje doser af kræftfremkaldende stof i e-cigaretter

APPENDIX III – WEBSITE FRONT PAGES

A: BLU (www.blucigs.com)

The screenshot shows the BLU website front page. At the top is a navigation bar with the BLU logo, links for STORE, EXPLORE, BLU REWARDS, SUPPORT, and JOIN FOR FREE, a search bar, and links for Log In, My Cart (0), Checkout, and Find a Store. The main banner features two images: on the left, three BLU PLUS+ Xpress Kits; on the right, a collage of various flavors including tobacco, mint, vanilla, and fruit. Below the banner is the section 'The blu Lineup' with the text 'More choices give you more freedom. Find a great selection of kits, flavor cartridges, disposables and accessories—and get free shipping on all of it. [Learn about our products.](#)' This section displays four product categories: blu™ Flavors (showing various flavor boxes), blu PLUS+ Xpress Kit (showing three kits), blu™ Rechargeable Kits (showing a kit with a charging dock), and blu Tanks™ (showing two tank products). At the bottom is a blue banner for 'blu Leads the Pack' featuring an image of a rechargeable kit and the text: 'blu eCigs® electronic cigarettes offer the ideal combo of quality, variety and convenience.'

Log In My Cart (0) Checkout Find a Store

blu STORE EXPLORE BLU REWARDS SUPPORT JOIN FOR FREE Search

blu PLUS+ Xpress Kit

One Simple Kit. Many Great Features. SHOP NOW

What's Your Flavor? BLU EMPLOYEES REVEAL THEIR FAVORITE FLAVOR

The blu Lineup

More choices give you more freedom. Find a great selection of kits, flavor cartridges, disposables and accessories—and get free shipping on all of it. [Learn about our products.](#)

blu™ Flavors blu PLUS+ Xpress Kit blu™ Rechargeable Kits blu Tanks™

blu Leads the Pack

blu eCigs® electronic cigarettes offer the ideal combo of quality, variety and convenience.

PRODUCTS

NJOY

REGISTER | SIGN IN | CART

MEMORIAL DAY SALE

40% OFF LAKE KITS + FREE SHIPPING WITH CODE REFRESH40

35% OFF SITE-WIDE + FREE SHIPPING WITH CODE MEMORIAL25

CHOOSE YOUR FLAVOR, CLAIM YOUR CODE & LET THE SUMMER BEGIN



VAPING

RECHARGE

KINGS

Enjoy the pleasure of a classic e-cigarette with the convenience of a rechargeable device. Choose your flavor, claim your code & let the summer begin.

SHOP VAPING

SHOP RECHARGE

SHOP KINGS

INDEPENDENT FROM BIG TOBACCO

NJOY is proud to be a leading independent e-cigarette and e-liquid company. Our mission is to provide a high-quality, independent e-cigarette and e-liquid experience. We are not owned by Big Tobacco and we never will be. We believe that the vaping and e-liquid industry can change the world and we are proud to stand with our customers and partners to take part in this movement.

INDEPENDENT FROM BIG TOBACCO

HOW TO VAPE — LEARN EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW NOW!

Please check out our simple step-by-step customer guide to vaping! Great vaping is within reach. Only at NJOY.

LEARN MORE



100% SATISFACTION GUARANTEE

YOUR SATISFACTION IS GUARANTEED

NJOY's 100% satisfaction guarantee — 100% satisfaction and action — or you get your money back!

LEARN MORE



INTRODUCING THE ARTIST COLLECTION

The Artist Collection is an exclusive line of e-liquids created by one of the leading artists in the vape industry in partnership with NJOY.

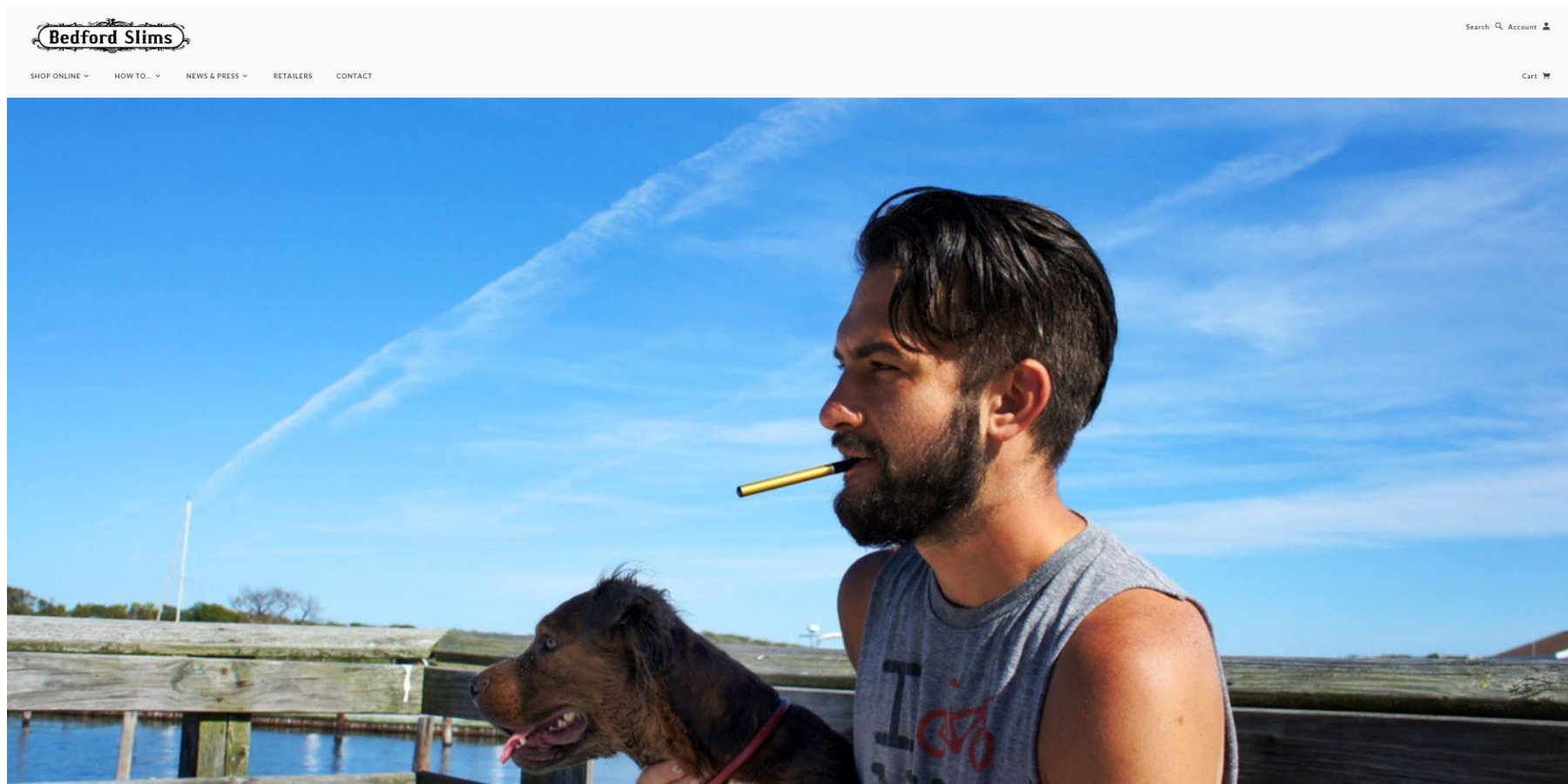
LEARN MORE

INTRODUCING AMAZING NEW E-LIQUID FLAVORS FROM NJOY

From classic flavors to new e-liquid flavors, NJOY is proud to bring you the best e-liquid flavors. Choose your flavor, claim your code & let the summer begin.


SHOP E-LIQUIDS

C: BEDFORD SLIMS (www.bedfordslims.com)



D: XSMOKE (www.xsmoke.com)

Mit Abonnement Log ind

Kontakt os på telefon, chat eller e-mail  Language **Dansk** ▼
Tlf.: 8913 6011 - E-mail: support.dk@xsmoke.com



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